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IN PRAISE OF EARLY NIGHTS

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Blair and family steal away for a break in the Seychelles



BY NICHOLAS WATT AND STEPHEN FARRELL

TONY BLAIR has set aside the burdens of office and discreetly whisked his family away to the Seychelles for a week's holiday.

Accompanied by his wife, Cherie, and three children, and Gale Booth, his mother-in-law, the Prime Minister landed yesterday morning on the picturesquely island of La Digue after an overnight flight from Gatwick. This is the Blairs second foreign holiday since the election.

They have rented a lodge in the grounds of an old plantation house owned by President René of the Seychelles. The house, called La Grande Case, gained notoriety

when it was used as the setting for the steamy film *Goodbye Emmanuelle*. The lodge the Blairs have rented is not owned by the President and will cost £200 a day.

The Prime Minister's break in the sun was kept under such tight wraps that many staff in Downing Street had no idea that the Blairs had sneaked away on Sunday night. One press officer, who was asked about the whereabouts of the Prime Minister yesterday morning, said: "He's at Chequers."

The Blairs flew out on an Air Seychelles flight from Gatwick on Sunday night, landing at Mahé, the main island of the Seychelles, ten and a half hours later. The prime ministerial party, including body-



La Digue, where the Blairs have rented a £200-a-day lodge

guards and aides, booked weeks in advance and occupied business-class seats on the Boeing 767-200.

The full fare for each adult is £2,911, with a 30 per cent discount for young children. Euan, 13, and

Nicholas, 12, are both over the age limit and would have travelled as adults. The Blairs paid for their own tickets, but the travel costs of the police and civil servants, who are in charge of setting up a communica-

tions link, were met through the public purse. As business-class customers the party would have been offered courtesy champagne and a choice of wines to accompany their meals.

After landing, the party would have had a chance to glimpse the tropical sun before they transferred to 20-minute charter flights to La Digue. Each helicopter, carrying only four passengers, costs £1,000 to charter one way.

Downing Street sources had earlier said that Mr Blair planned to spend Christmas at Chequers, the Prime Minister's country retreat.

After, Mr Blair let slip to journalists that he might take the family away for a few days if the opportunity presented itself.

Labour sources, aware that traditional party supporters may not appreciate the sight of the Prime Minister soaking up the Indian Ocean sun, were at pains to point out that the holiday would give Mr Blair a well-earned rest and provide a chance to spend time with his children.

In addition, Mr Blair also intends to have talks with Seychelles government officials. He made the acquaintance of President René during the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh.

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Patten eyes new role as mayor of London

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT, WHITEHALL EDITOR

CHRIS PATTEN admitted publicly for the first time last night that he might like to become the elected mayor of London "if the job was right".

But the last Governor of Hong Kong added that if the job were wrong, no politician of any class from any party would be interested.

In an interview with *The Times* Mr Patten said: "No one knows what the job is going to be. If it is just a bit of political under-shifting or choosing someone who will be a transmission mechanism for decisions taken by Gordon Brown or John Prescott, then it is going to be difficult to find politicians and non-politicians from the left, right and centre, of real class who would want to do it."

"It does depend — not just for me, but for other people, too — on what the job looks like. I am sure, however, if the job is right — and if it is true the Conservative Party will run a London-wide primary to choose a candidate — that would be an extremely attractive thing to do."

Mr Patten, in London to oversee the decorating of his new family home in Barnes, conceded that he "liked running things" and said that he might be interested in further jobs in the public service. But he is clearly undecided about his political future, and whether he should try to return to Westminster as an MP.

"That is the 110 per cent, 18-carat honest answer. I really have not come to a firm conclusion and I don't want to seem to be grand about it. The notion that Conservative grandees can be

parachuted into constituencies has been exploded with regular hilarity. You try and get parachuted in and you end up breaking both legs."

He was also keen to kill any speculation that he intended to stand against William Hague for the Conservative Party leadership. Mr Hague would lead the party "for a very long time", he said, adding: "No one has ever discussed the Tory leadership with me and if they were to attempt to do so, they would get short shrift. I think one of the things the Conservative Party has to realize is the importance of self-discipline and loyalty."

His own future will depend largely on what happens to the family's beloved Norfolk terriers, Whisky and Soda. Mr Patten is determined to continue his campaign to reverse the quarantine rules which prevent him bringing them home. In the meantime, the pets are being looked after by "kind, dog-loving" friends near the Pattens' country house in southwest France.

The extent to which we can base ourselves back in Britain will be affected in part by the quarantine regulations. Without our dogs, life would be very difficult. I certainly do not want to put them in quarantine. It is such a stupid policy, with no scientific basis for it any more."

Pointedly referring to the death in quarantine of the former Governor of Bermuda's dog, he added: "People say you should not be soppy about animals but they become part of the family."

Patten interview, page 2



Chris and Lavender Patten with their daughter's cocker spaniel C-Lo. Their own dogs are in France

Voting delayed

Voting in Kenya's elections was extended by a further 24 hours in some areas after flooding and accusations of vote-rigging

Plea to Straw as reporter in drugs exposé is arrested

BY STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE *Mirror* journalist who claimed to have bought drugs from a senior minister's son was arrested yesterday for possession of cannabis.

Dawn Alford, 30, was arrested when she arrived at Kensington police station in south London with another *Mirror* journalist and a lawyer to give police the cannabis and make a statement. She was bailed until February.

Mrs Alford was arrested on the advice of the Crown Prosecution Service, apparently because of the length of time the drugs were held. The alternative would have been to question her under caution and release her.

The *Mirror* reported on Christmas Eve that she had been sold 1.92 grams of cannabis resin in a south London public house by the 17-year-old son of a Cabinet minister.

He said the youth was not entrapped or "set up", but freely offered to supply cannabis and had admitted the criminal offence.

Mr Morgan said: "Our reporter was handed the substance at 11.30pm in a London pub and took it to a forensic laboratory the following morning to confirm it was cannabis. This is normal pro-

cedure and prevents newspapers wasting police time by taking them a series of Oxo cubes for examination in the middle of the night."

"Police have not to my knowledge ever questioned this procedure in the past, let alone considered an arrest for possessing the drug obtained in these circumstances."

The statement claimed that the investigating officer had accepted that there was no evidence Miss Alford had intended to keep the cannabis, but the decision to arrest her had been out of his hands. Mr Morgan added: "We will be appealing directly to the Home Secretary to launch an inquiry into this farcical situation."

The arrest of journalists taking part in undercover investigations into criminal activities is extremely rare. A number of reporters have bought drugs including cocaine and ecstasy in order to expose traffickers, but they have not been prosecuted.

A police source on the whole case could be delivered to the

Baby Noel's mother found living rough

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A WOMAN who abandoned her baby son at a council office two days before Christmas has been found wandering the streets in a confused state.

The mother, a married woman in her mid-20s, is however, unlikely to be reunited with her son in the immediate future. The two-month-old child, whom police officers called Noel, spent Christmas with foster parents and is expected to join his mother's two other children in care.

Police said yesterday that

passers-by had alerted them to a woman wandering the streets of Totnes, in a distressed and dishevelled state on Sunday lunchtime. She had apparently been living rough since handing her son to staff at the Civic Centre in Plymouth, telling them she could not cope.

Although she told officers she was Noel's mother, her story was so confused that it took several hours to establish that it was true. She told police that the baby's father had walked out two months before he was born.

She is now being looked after by social services who are trying to assess whether she can care for the child. In the meantime, the baby will remain with his foster parents, who have now stopped calling him Noel and started using his real name.

Inspector David Evans said that the mother had expressed concern about the child, but had not asked to see him yet.

Officers who visited her Housing Association home in Plymouth described it as "clean and in good order".



Baby "Noel" is still with foster family

Prisons chief to head Maze murder inquiry

BY AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Northern Ireland office sought to restore confidence in security at the Maze last night by appointing the Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales to inspect the jail after the murder of loyalist leader Billy Wright.

General Sir David Ramsbotham will investigate Saturday's killing by members of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and how the weapons used to murder Wright, known as "King Rat", were smuggled into the supposedly high security jail on the outskirts of Belfast. He will report to the Government.

The appointment is part of a plan to tighten up security at the prison announced by Adams Ingram, the Northern Ireland Security Minister, during a press conference in the Maze yesterday.

Random weekly searches are being introduced immediately, it was announced. An inquiry into the escape of IRA man Liam Averill before Christmas will be extended to include the shooting of Wright. Mr Ingram said that the new measures, decided

upon during yesterday's conference of security and prison chiefs chaired by Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, was designed to "do everything possible to prevent a repetition" of events such as the Wright killing. He said that there were no plans for resignations.

But the new measures will do little to satisfy Northern Irish community leaders, who complain bitterly that the prison system is lax and too greatly concerned with placating the jail's 560 republican and loyalist prisoners.

Finlay Spratt, chairman of the Northern Ireland Prison Officers' Association, welcomed the appointment of Sir David Ramsbotham but criticised the way the Maze has operated.

He said there should have been regular random weekly searches. By announcing their introduction now the authorities were "damned by their own statement". The last full inspection of the prison was in July, after which loyalists set fire to their wing in

Continued on page 2, col 4

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Tories' forgotten man comes home to put his house in order

Chris Patten is back in town and already eyeing the political scene as he takes a year out to think and write a book, reports Valerie Elliott

CHRIS PATTEN, the former Governor of Hong Kong and Conservative Cabinet Minister, is back in town. Amid the tea chests and packing cases in his elegant new South London home overlooking Barnes Common, it is clear he is missing the political front line.

But with an appearance on BBC's *Today* programme yesterday, and more television interviews next month, Mr Patten is not going to become the forgotten man of British politics. He has given himself a year to write a book about the tiger economies of Asia, to take time out and to think, but he stresses he has not made up his mind what comes next.

His wife, Lavender, unpacking belongings in their kitchen, was hesitant about a political comeback. "I'd rather not. We've been through all that. But you can't stop people doing what they want to do. We'll wait and see."

Perhaps the public most remember the Patents in tears – on the night in 1992 when he lost his seat as MP for Bath, and again in June this year as the Union Flag came down for the last time over Hong Kong.

"The notion that Conservative grandees can be parachuted into constituencies has been exploded with regular hilarity, and Kenneth Clarke, for whom I have the greatest respect".

The Conservative Party has always had two wings. If you don't use both wings, you don't get off the ground. You don't fly. I may have spent a few years in the Far East but I am never going to be anything other than a liberal Tory."

The Patents hope to return from their French country house more permanently after Easter. Their plans will be determined largely by their pens. Whisky and Soda, Norfolk-terriers, which the Patents are determined to save from quarantine.

Mr Patten said: "Whisky especially has been unwell and has had an operation. We really cannot risk putting him in quarantine."

They are hoping the Government will change the existing regulations so they can be reunited as a family in their new home. For the moment the Patents are enjoying the frolics of Clio, a black and white cocker spaniel belonging to their daughter Laura.

He has to write another 40,000 words of his book by



The public may most remember Chris Patten in tears, above at the handover of Hong Kong to China in June

Large blue and white Chinese pots awaiting plants and two elephant stools lined the terrace. They were reminders of a world away but Mr Patten showed he was still engrossed in British politics and the debate on welfare reform.

Tony Blair, he claimed, was addressing "a Conservative agenda" in his bid to reform the welfare state. It was not surprising this had "amazed and confused" his traditional supporters.

But Mr Patten said he had always believed that the welfare state needed tackling, if

ever the country was "to get a grip on the intolerable rise in public spending" and added that Mr Blair should tackle the problem on a cross-party basis.

The difficulty for the Labour Party, however, is that they are being consensual on alternate days. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, it's the Government of all the people and on the other days Mr Campbell [Alastair Campbell, Mr Blair's press secretary] and others are clinging to the Labour Government."

The Tories had already put the building-blocks in place for welfare reform, he said. He said welfare reform was

"but let's not forget that if the Tory Government had tried to do this they would have been denounced by the Labour Opposition up hill and down dale. That to some extent undermines the moral authority of Labour doing the job, and particularly with the wobblies in the Labour Party over it."

"I think the sensible thing in the national interest is to assure the country they are serious on welfare reform. If they are not the results will be sad for the country and damaging to the Labour Government."

The Tories had already put the building-blocks in place for welfare reform, he said.

Question of allegiance in quangos vetting

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT, WHITEHALL EDITOR

PEOPLE applying for posts on public bodies and quangos could face tougher political vetting under plans being considered by Sir Len Peach, the Public Appointments Commissioner.

They might be asked how they voted at the election, whether they belong to a political party and if they have given any cash to a political party, over what period, and if it is above £250, £500 or £1,000.

But Sir Len Peach is concerned that far too many political questions will deter many people from applying for public appointments while his aim is to widen the net of potential recruits to the various bodies.

However he wants to test if people are being asked the right questions about political activity or whether a more intense grilling is necessary.

Before reaching any firm conclusions on future vetting Sir Len is to order a political survey next month of 500 people who have been ap-

pointed to NHS Trusts and various other public bodies since the Labour Government came to power.

He wants to find out exactly what political activity they undertook before applying and being appointed to a post.

He was concerned that a survey of appointments last year showed that only 10.3 per cent of those appointed admitted to any political activity and is anxious to ascertain if this is a true picture of appointments or if it represents an underestimate.

His move also follows a recommendation from Lord Nolan, the former public standards watchdog, who suggested that people should be asked about any "significant political activity" undertaken.

Lord Nolan ruled out however asking people how they voted at the last election or whether they belonged to a political party on grounds of privacy.

But in his final report last summer before stepping down as chairman of the Committee

Maze killing inquiry

Continued from page 1

protest at the stricter regime.

While not calling for resignations, Mr Spratt demanded a full review of the Government's attitude to the prison and prisoners.

Those people responsible for running the Northern Ireland Prison Service have to examine their consciences, they have been making concession after concession to the inmates, he said.

The difficulty for the concessions, influenced by the Northern Irish peace talks, had resulted in a prison officer being removed from watchtower duty on Saturday to allow Wright and other loyalist prisoners to meet their family in private. The guard's absence allowed Wright's killers climb over the roof.

Martin Mogg, the prison's senior governor, admitted that the new weekly searches would have to be carried out with the cooperation of the prisoners. But he said he would not ask permission from prisoners' leaders and added: "If they do not cooperate I will have no option but to suspend visits for so long as they are opposing the searches."



Ramsbotham, left, will report to the Government on the killing of Billy Wright, right, in the Maze.

But the prospect of a tough regime is likely to be met with anger in the prison, particularly by the loyalist prisoners already disgruntled at the murder of one of their leaders.

John White, prison spokesman for the Ulster Democratic Party, said he would be fearful of the consequences of "collective punishment".

He is due to meet UDA and other prisoners in the Maze today to discuss the security situation.

Three men charged with

Wright's murder appeared in Lisburn Magistrate's Court amid tight security yesterday.

Christopher Michael Patrick McWilliams, 35, John Martin Gerard Kennedy, 35, and John Glennon, 32, whose addresses were all given as the Maze prison, were also each charged with the possession of two firearms, a Derringer .22 pistol, and a PA63 handgun and a quantity of ammunition.

They were remanded in custody to the Maze to reappear in the prison court on January 14.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Drugged girl foils airport kidnap bid

Police were last night guarding a teenage girl after she thwarted an apparent attempt to drugged and smuggle her out of the country. It is understood that the girl, who lives in Bradford, comes from a family living in Pakistan. Her parents had taken exception to a relationship she had formed with a man in Yorkshire, but she had rejected their request for her to break it off and return home.

The 17-year-old was allegedly given sleeping pills in a drink on Sunday evening and driven to Manchester Airport. She came round at the departure lounge and alerted officials before she could be forced on to a flight to Islamabad.

Last night Greater Manchester Police charged two men from the same address in Bradford with false imprisonment and administering a noxious substance. They were released on police bail to appear before magistrates in Manchester on January 22.

Bishop condemns Blair

The Bishop of Aston in the Birmingham diocese, the Right Rev John Austin, one of many Church of England leaders who welcomed Labour's election victory, has condemned the Government for failing to help the worst-off in society. The bishop, formerly head of the board for social responsibility in the London diocese, said that Tony Blair was using language "almost indistinguishable" from his Conservative predecessors.

Lone mothers' hostels

Youth workers voiced support for a Government plan to build single mothers in hostels equipped with training units and creches as part of an initiative to help them find work. Under the scheme, which is being examined by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, the women would live in blocks of flats equipped with creches, job clubs and computer training facilities. They are known as "foyer" projects, taking their name from a French scheme.

Beef ban 'unjustified'

The producer of television's most popular cookery programmes has denounced the Government's handling of the beef-on-the-bone crisis as "the most pathetic example of scientific confusion" in a series of infounded health scares. Peter Baragette, who produces *Food and Drink Can't Cook Won't Cook* and *Ready, Steady, Cook*, said there was no scientific justification for banning beef on the bone and fear of consumer prejudice was driving decisions.

Climber saved by snow

A climber who fell 100ft down a sheer rock face survived when his fall was cushioned by a fresh blanket of snow, rescuers said yesterday. Karl Fullbrook, 28, a chemist from Shelsmore Common, Berkshire, suffered a broken leg and smashed knee when he slipped while making his way off the 2,700ft summit of Aonach Eagach in Glencoe on Sunday. The fresh snow is also thought to have acted as a brake to prevent him from falling further.

Heart veteran dies

One of Britain's longest surviving heart-transplant patients has died after spending a supermarket car park on Christmas Eve. Steven Dolan, 39, died on the 13th anniversary of the day he was allowed home from hospital after his operation. It is thought he suffered a heart attack. His former wife, Angie, 37, from Beccleshaw, Walsall, West Midlands, said he had lived his life to the full, and had enjoyed the 13 extra years of life.

New union launched

The biggest union for civil servants will be launched in the New Year, promising New Labour-style pledges to improve services to its members. The 260,000-strong Public and Commercial Services union (PCS), which has been formed through the merger of the PTC and CPSA unions, aims to be more "member centred" and has promised the rank and file will have the final say on major decisions such as pay.

Cartoon warning

Three cartoon characters inspired by the hit film *Toy Story* are spearheading a Government television campaign to cut the number of accidents caused by dangerous toys. The commercials will be broadcast to coincide with the sales when bargain hunters may be tempted to place cost above safety. The video warns parents that 36,000 children and a similar number of adults are injured by toys each year.

Diana letter 'forgery'

A letter suggesting that Diana, Princess of Wales, had been two months pregnant when she died was denounced as a forgery yesterday by hospital officials. The letter, published in *Actualités*, a Spanish news magazine, purports to be a doctor's report to Jean-Pierre Chevretton, the French Prime Minister, on a post-mortem examination at the Pitie-Salpêtrière hospital, where the Princess died.

£1,300 teddy bear stolen

An 8ft tall teddy bear dressed as a Buckingham Palace guard and weighing about 10 stone has been stolen. The £1,300 toy was taken from the Teddy Bear Shop in Birmingham City Centre. Manageress Wendy Buffey said she was amazed the bear had gone missing. "The bear stands guard at the door and can only be carried by two people. There's no way it would fit in a car."

£10,000 grant for otters

Wildlife experts have won a £10,000 grant to lure the otter back to the Yorkshire Dales. The money will provide suitable habitats at nine secret locations along the River Wharfe. The last otters in the area were killed by pollution during the 1940s. Half the money comes from the Millennium Trust; the rest from the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water, Yorkshire Electricity and landowners.

Website omits Mandelson and keeps dome in the distance

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE Millennium Commission is spending £750,000 to take the Greenwich dome off the map. A new official website, being announced today, features a full-colour graphic of the United Kingdom giving a regional breakdown of how much is being spent in each part of the country.

But the dome, which is taking £449 million of lottery players' money, is missing. The commission has hired the image consultants Lloyd Northover Cingate to explain how it spends 5.6p of every National Lottery £1.17p, "might start by pointing

out that this public relations blitz is costing lottery players up to £250,000 a year for the next three years, under the terms of their contract. The nine commissioners, led by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, are keen to tell the public about the many worthy causes they support and to escape from what one official described as "the shadow of the dome".

During an exclusive preview, *The Times* quickly realised what a thorough job the consultants had done. A surfer could spend hours browsing on the website without finding a mention of Greenwich. As for Peter

Mandelson, the Minister Without Portfolio who is hosting the year-long extravaganza on the Meridian, there is not a peep.

When the Home page is called up, a capital "M", the Millennium Commission's new logo, rises from behind an orange slash in the top left-hand corner of the screen. We clicked on the "News" icon to find only two items, one announcing the new website, the other dealing with a "National Space Centre" in Leicester.

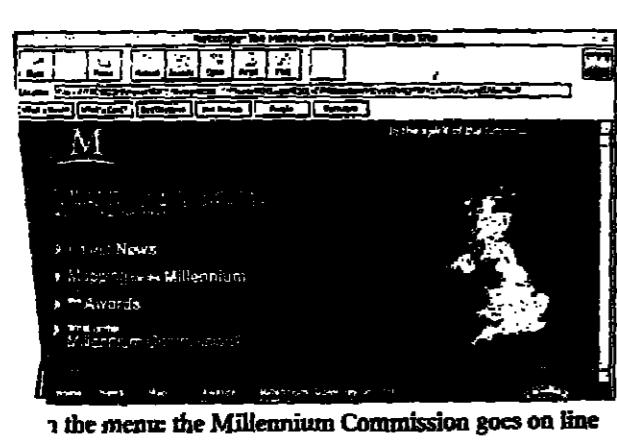
Next, the map. This has orange squares for each major project. There were two in London. We clicked on the easternmost and summoned a

picture of the Tate Gallery of Modern Art. The western square was the British Museum Great Court.

Clicking on "What is the Millennium Commission?", the same estatic women were pictured but this time someone had remembered to put a caption underneath. The photograph was showing "The first 120 successful Millennium Awards Scheme individuals celebrate the

anniversary of their Millennium Awards."

Here at last there was a brief mention of Greenwich. Another passing reference to the dome was found by clicking "Millennium Festival". This would be held in the dome. The commission's website is at <http://www.millennium.gov.uk>. "Britain is leading a drive to stop the internet being used for secret links between gangs, including paedophile rings and terrorist networks," Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, plans to use Britain's EU presidency to give security services wider powers.



in the menu: the Millennium Commission goes on line

Palm-fringed estate where a legend was born

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

THE ISLAND

LA DIGUE, the holiday destination chosen by Tony Blair, is one of the most beautiful of the Seychelles archipelago, 1,000 miles off the coast of Africa.

The Blairs are staying as paying guests of President France Albert René at a traditional plantation house on the L'Union estate in the southwest of the island where the soft-porn film *Emmanuelle* was shot in the 1970s.

The plantation house where they are staying is a low-set colonial building with overhanging palm thatch roof providing shade, set in a dense grove of palm trees.

When the sun shines the Blairs will enjoy temperatures of about 30C (86F) in a part of the world renowned for tranquil beaches and exotic flowers. But the islands have their heaviest rainfall at this time of year with an average of 13in in December and 11in in January.

The Blairs are staying 15 minutes' ride from La Digue Pier, where tourists arrive from Mahé and Praslin to be taken to their hotels and self-catering chalets by ox cart.

The plantation house is not usually rented to the public and is available only to personal guests of the President. Recent visitors include the

curried chicken and octopus. Birds and sealife provide the other main attractions on La Digue.

Fishing and tourism are the main sources of income for the island's 2,000 inhabitants. Ox cart and bicycle are the main means of transport on the 10 sq km island, the third largest of the Seychelles in population and fourth in size.

The highest point, Nid D'Aigles (Eagle's Nest) is only 1,000ft above sea level, making it an ideal walk and picnic site for a young family.

The island is surrounded by a reef and the flat interior areas are filled with plantations growing vanilla, almonds and coffee and the only town of any size is La Réunion.

The island was discovered in 1768 by Marion Dufresne and named after one of his ships. Early settlers had to cope with crocodiles, lizards and snakes and by 1771 only seven families lived there.

The Flycatcher Reserve, founded by the chocolate industrialist Christopher Cadbury, was set up to protect the Seychelles' black paradise flycatcher.

The island crops include vanilla and the L'Union estate itself produces high grade copra, or dried coconut. The young Blairs can while away a

few hours inspecting the calorifer for drying the coconut meat, and an ox-drawn coconut oil press used to produce the sun lotion they will be needing in somewhat greater quantities than during their Christmas break at Chequers.

Elsewhere they can find giant land tortoises and terrapins.

Inland the island becomes

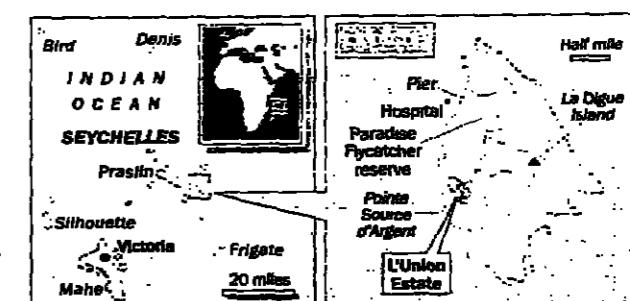
marshy in an area known as La Mare Souape, where bamboo grows and cattle graze near a river beneath tamarind and Indian almond trees. When bored on land, they can windsurf, take to glass-bottomed boat to inspect the coral, watch mum and dad learn to scuba dive or look out

for the La Digue cross, erected in 1931 by a Swiss priest in memory of sailors who died

trying to reach the island.

On other islands tourists pay £1,500 for a week's big-game fishing or to laze on outlying palm tree clusters such as Bird Island and Silhouette.

The first-class hotels near by boast games rooms and beachfront swimming pools with bar stools allowing customers to order drinks without leaving the water.



The plantation house on the L'Union estate where the Blairs are staying. The soft-porn film *Emmanuelle* was shot on the estate in the 1970s

Former Marxist with a new line in capitalism

BY MICHAEL BINNION
AND RAY KENNEDY

THE HOST

ALBERT RENÉ, President of the Seychelles and Tony Blair's host, is a man who has moved even further than the Prime Minister from Left to Right.

But the former Marxist, who ran a one-party state for 15 years, has now so heartily embraced the world of private finance that world leaders have given a warning that his country is in danger of becoming a haven for drug dealers and money launderers.

President René was a controversial figure before he embraced multi-party democracy and won a 60 per cent majority in the 1993 elections. As Prime Minister in 1977, he deposed Sir James Mancham, the country's first president after independence, during a bloodless coup in which Tanzanians played a considerable part.

Strong-arm tactics were used to deal with dissenters. Gérard Hoarau, a leading political dissident, was assassinated in London after his involvement in a bungled coup in 1981, the most bizarre

of several attempts to overthrow President René's Government. It was carried out by a group of South African mercenaries disguised as members of a beer-drinking club called The Ancient Order of Froth Blowers. Their leader was Colonel "Mad" Mike Hoare, a veteran of mercenary campaigns in the Congo in the 1960s. The 44-strong group flew into Victoria, the Seychelles capital, on a civilian flight from Swaziland with assault rifles and ammunition.

After that episode the economy declined and with the collapse of communism, aid from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union dried up. Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, then Overseas Development Minister, summed up Britain's attitude in the House of Commons: "We regard the Seychelles as a one-party socialist state which exercises undue restrictions on freedom of association and of expression. We are not in business to help a Government of that kind."

President René, a graduate of King's College London, who was called to the Bar in 1957, changed course, discarded his socialist clothes and set out to woo Western investors. Tourism increased rapidly, and now accounts for 70 per cent of foreign earnings. However, about 20 per cent of the islanders live in poverty.

President René, 62, has announced that he will stand again for office for the last time next year. Few doubt he will win with a landslide. He has brought prosperity and national attention to the 115 scattered islands with his plan to turn it into an offshore financial services and investment centre.

The tranquil beaches mask a turbulent interior

Money laundering soils image as tourist paradise

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

BLACK ECONOMY

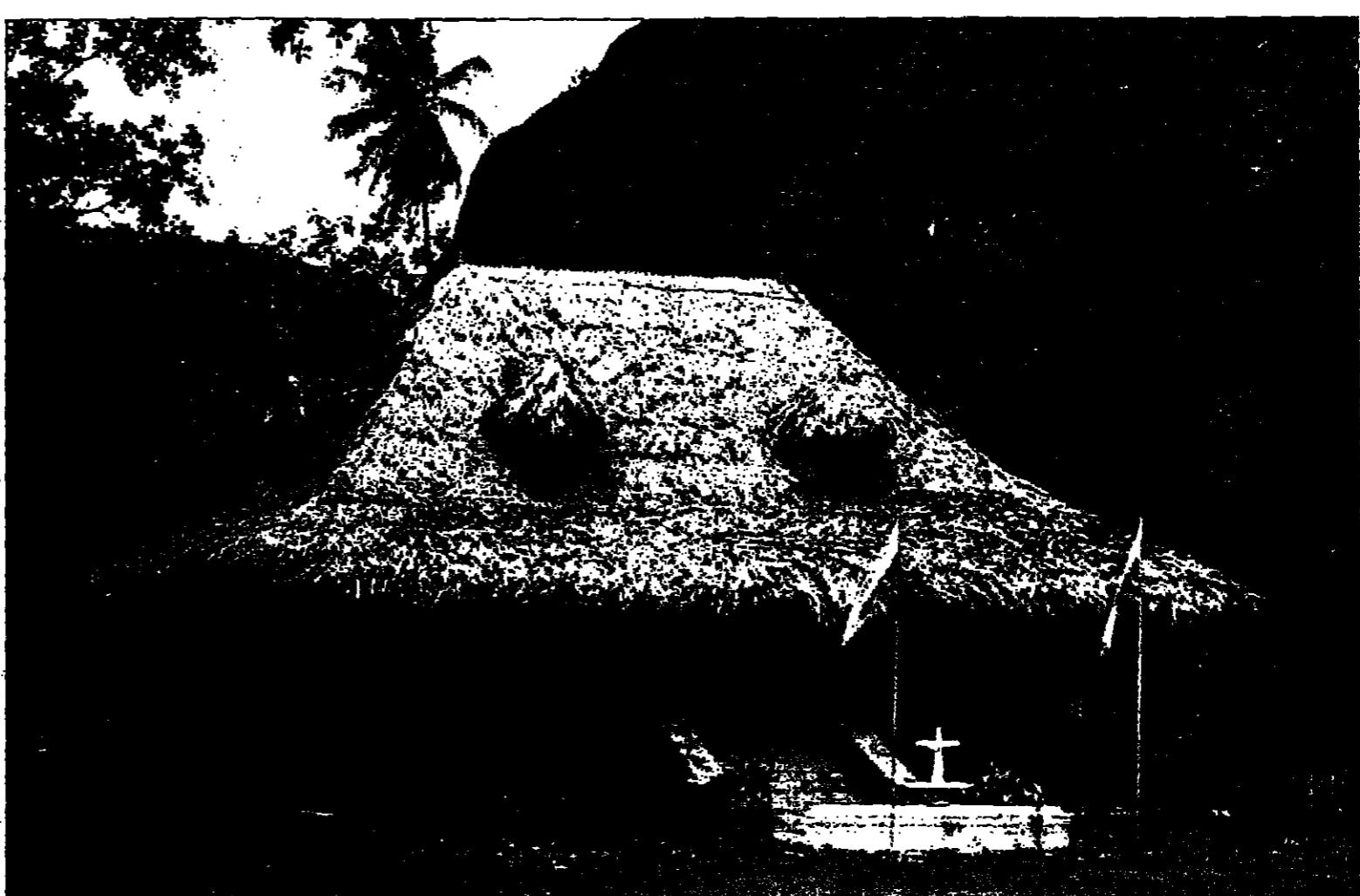
THE Seychelles were once a haven for pirates and their buried treasure. Two hundred years later loot is still being hidden there but now by money launderers.

The Seychelles are regarded by international investigators as one of about 40 offshore paradises that have become magnets for dirty money. A study by the Group of Eight economic powers last year estimated that the combined black economies of these countries controlled upto \$2.5 trillion. The cash

committed violence or drug trafficking in the Seychelles themselves. They could also be given Seychelles diplomatic passports.

Drug barons and gangsters began making travel arrangements for their cash. But within three months the legislation had been shelved after international outcry and a warning to banks from investigators for the Group of Eight.

There were also suspicions last year that some of the islands in the Seychelles were being used to store drugs in transit but nothing has been proved by UN investigators.



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Nature-lover fined for pruning her tree

Michael Hornsby reports on the £2,500 cost of cutting back a sycamore

A LIFELONG nature-lover and horticulturist has been branded a criminal and fined £400, plus £100 costs, for pruning a tree in her garden without getting planning permission.

Mary Edwards, aged 63, who was found guilty just before Christmas by magistrates in Cromer, Norfolk, also faces a solicitor's bill of £1,500 on top of the £50 she paid to a tree surgeon to do the job.

Her crime was to cut about half a dozen branches off the top of a 40 ft sycamore, one of Britain's most ubiquitous trees, in a corner of the two-acre grounds of her Edwin Lutyens-designed house in the coastal village of Overstrand.

Mrs Edwards, who has lived in the house with her husband since 1969, says she was not aware that her section of the village was part of a conservation area or that she needed the approval of North Norfolk District Council for the work to be done. "The

sycamore is in a windy corner and I decided to lop some branches off the top to give it a better chance in a gale," she said yesterday. "Some of the branches were also diseased. It never occurred to me that I needed permission to do this in my own garden."

"No one ever wrote to us, or told us, that we were in a conservation area. There was nothing in the house deeds about it. In the past the old gardener we then had used to prune trees occasionally and no complaint was ever made. This is bureaucracy gone mad."

Mrs Edwards had the work done in February. The council decided to prosecute after being tipped off by another resident of the village, although Mrs Edwards does not know who this was.

"If I was a hooligan and had cut down a tree, then I would deserve to be fined," she said. "I have been a horticulturist for the last 40 years. I would

have more hurt a tree than jump off a cliff."

"I hired the tree surgeon at great expense to make the tree healthier. That is exactly what he has done. The council told me this was a conservation area — funny, for the last 26 years I thought it was my garden."

Mike Terry, the council's Assistant Chief Planning Officer, was unrepentant about the prosecution: "Mrs Edwards took a fair chunk out of the top of the tree, considerably reducing its value as a visual amenity," he said. "The court agreed with us that the tree had not benefited from her attentions."

"In any case, under the Town and Country Planning Act, she should not have undertaken any work without permission. That part of the village has been in a conservation area since 1978. The parish council would have been notified, and notices about the change of status

would have been placed in local newspapers."

Mrs Edwards would have earned the plaudits of many foresters and conservationists had she gone further and cut down the whole tree. The sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, a native of central Europe, imported to Britain about 400 years ago, is widely regarded as something of a menace.

In woods it spreads rapidly by seed at the expense of other trees. Its saplings can live for many years in shade, which few indigenous trees are able to do, and the dense litter formed by its leathery leaves suppresses woodland flowers and deters birds and other wildlife.

In his *The History of the Countryside*, Oliver Rackham, the Cambridge botanist, writes that the sycamore "is a tree which no responsible person should plant without carefully considering the long-term consequences".



Mary Edwards and the sycamore: "It never occurred to me that I needed permission".

Guardian of stately homes is dead at 89

By PHILIP DELVES
BROUGHAM

JAMES Lees-Milne, whose conservation work for the National Trust saved many of Britain's great stately homes, and whose waspish diaries made the occupants of those houses squirm, died on Sunday. He was 89.

Mr Lees-Milne worked for the National Trust's Country Houses Committee, which was set up in 1936, and persuaded the inhabitants of houses such as Cliveden, Nostell Priory and West Wycombe Park that, with the help of the Trust, their houses could be saved.

Although his critics called him a snob, Mr Lees-Milne preferred to be called an acute observer of class distinction. His books on architecture included *Ancestral Voices* and *Caves of Ice*.

Leading article, page 15
Obituary, page 17

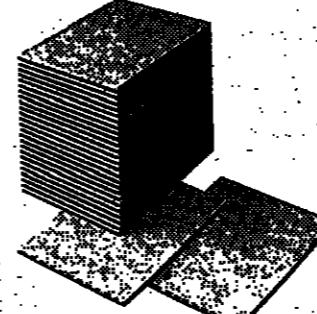
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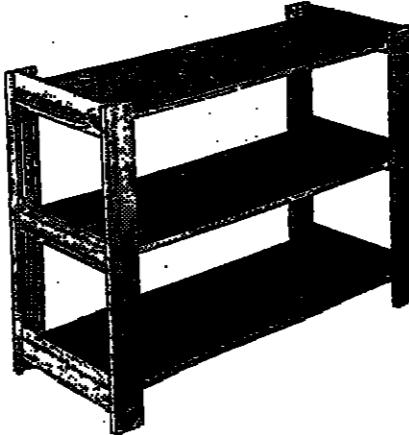
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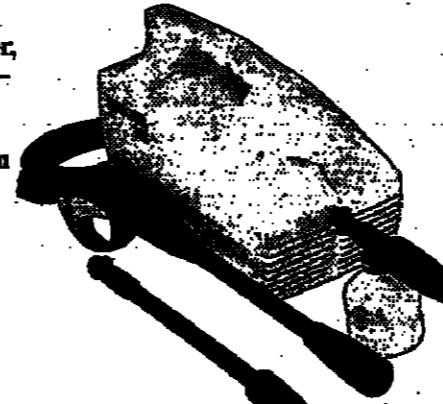
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Father kills himself after shooting his disturbed son

By LIN JENKINS

THE family of a man who committed suicide after shooting his psychologically disturbed teenage son yesterday said that lack of professional help had led to the tragedy.

They claimed that the incessant demands of caring for Philip Carter, 16, who suffered from an obsession with cleanliness, caused his father, Gerald, to snap.

After a "family row" on Sunday the boy ripped up a book. His father lost control, grabbed shotgun and shot his son in the stomach. He then dialled 999 to confess his crime and summon help before walking into the garden of their bungalow home in Chichester, West Sussex, and shooting himself dead.

Philip was yesterday said to be comfortable in St Richard's Hospital, Chichester, after undergoing 2½ hours of emergency surgery. His mother, Christine, 46, was distraught and remained with relatives. She told her sister-in-law: "I have nothing to live for."

Mrs Carter had planned to take Philip to the doctor yesterday because his obsessive-compulsive disorder had deteriorated over Christmas. His condition meant he would wash his hands constantly, complain that his clothes were dirty even after three washes, and demand new shoes if he trod in dog mess. He insisted that the house be kept spotless.

His aunt Tina Carter, 50, a paediatric nurse, said she blamed the lack of psychological treatment and support for the family for the shootings. Philip's condition meant he had rituals and routines of ultra-cleanliness. "It drove his father to the limits. I think it would have pushed anyone

aged 9, 10 and 11, for her loss of control. "I love my kids and I wouldn't hurt them," she said, "but they had thrown the toys everywhere for two days after Christmas and they didn't deserve them. I got annoyed. I threw some of them in the bin. My husband sometimes drives me to distraction. I can hurt him by shouting and raising."

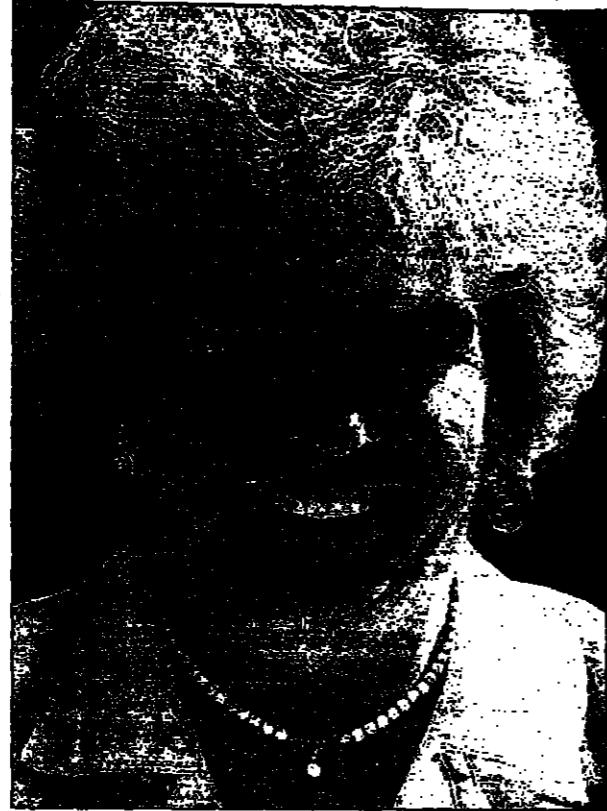
She added: "Christmas has been a big thing in it. I could do without Christmas."

Janet Brisley, for the prosecution, told Teesside Magistrates in Middlesbrough: "She is taking medication, and her husband said that leading up to Christmas she was becoming progressively worse."

Mrs Hughes, who admitted breaching the peace, was bound over in the sum of £25 for three months. She responded: "Thank you very much."

Guard of honour dead

Brain of Britain gives Mastermind a sore head



Daphne Fowler: says she cannot tell left from right

RADIO'S 'Brain of Britain' has ousted television's Mastermind. Daphne Fowler, a mother of five who dropped out of university more than 40 years ago, beat the reigning *Mastermind* champion Anne Ashurst by 35 points to 15 in a head-to-head contest.

The victory was the pinnacle of a quiz career during which Mrs Fowler has scaled new heights in trivia, from representing Britain in a *Skills of the Century* international to winning a car and cash prizes totalling £20,000.

For the first time in the *Masterbrain* contest between the victors of the two BBC quiz shows, the competitors were both women, and by coincidence both live in Somerset, although they had never met. They were born within a year of each other, are stalwarts of their pub quiz teams, left school with seven O levels and are self-confessed scatterbrains.

Mrs Fowler has trouble telling her right from her left and claims she had to write R and L on her hands to pass her driving test. She says she never goes shopping without a detailed list because she is

terribly forgetful. Mrs Ashurst, 59, was forced by teachers to give up mathematics at 13 because she was hopeless.

After her victory, which was broadcast on Radio 4 yesterday, Mrs Fowler, 58, said: "I'm thrilled to win against Anne, as *Mastermind* has finished and she was the last winner. It's a shame, because although I've won a lot of quiz games I always wanted to have a go at *Mastermind*."

The competitors in yesterday's *Masterbrain* quiz, which was hosted by the veteran question master Robert Robinson, also included the runners-up in *Mastermind* and *Brain of Britain*.

Mrs Fowler made a flying start, getting all her general knowledge questions right, and was soon picking up

extra points as her competitors answered wrongly.

The retired secretary from Weston-super-Mare, North West Somerset, said: "There

is a technique to using the buzzer when other people make mistakes which I don't think the others had mastered."

Mrs Ashurst admits to being "totally innumerate". She said: "I was lucky there were no maths questions on *Mastermind*."

The questions Mrs Fowler answered correctly to win the *Masterbrain* title included:

Which Italian city holds an art exhibition every other year known as the Biennale?

The Eden is one of Britain's sizeable northward-flowing rivers. In which county does it reach the sea?

Which duke is among Britain's five richest people?

In describing a car what does the term OHC mean?

The Greek or Turkish dish *Bacalao* is made from flaky pastry, nuts, sugar, spices, butter and what other ingredient?

Answers: 1. Venice. 2. Cumbria. 3. Westminster. 4. Overhead camshaft. 5. Honey.



Anne Ashurst: had to give up mathematics at 13

Couple blame hospital for baby son's death

By PAUL WILKINSON

A YOUNG mother gave birth to a son on a settle on Christmas Day two hours after a hospital had allegedly sent her home for the third time. The four-months-premature child named Callum survived for less than three hours, dying in the same hospital where his mother had gone for help.

Now the baby's family are demanding an inquiry and are consulting lawyers. They claim that staff at Doncaster Royal Infirmary in South Yorkshire was cleared of negligence after the parents of 34 babies born over a 10-year period complained that inadequate treatment had left their children brain-damaged. Two of them died. One family later received a £1.25 million settlement after their son was left handicapped.

Mr Welch continued: "The baby's head and shoulders were out by the time the paramedics walked in."

In its statement the trust said it regretted the "unfortunate circumstances" surrounding Mrs White's case.

"Her discharge was against the recommendation of the medical team but was permitted as she had an appointment booked for December 29. There was visual evidence of abnormal development of the baby, but a post-mortem has been refused." The baby was delivered by trained paramedics, it said.

It continued: "Gemma was admitted on December 23 for over an hour and treated for a urine infection. She was readmitted on December 25 but she asked to go home after around five hours of further treatment and investigation when symptoms had ceased."

The statement made no mention of her claimed visit on Christmas Eve. It said that

an incubator was not necessary when the baby arrived.

Five years ago the maternity unit at Doncaster Royal Infirmary in South Yorkshire was cleared of negligence after the parents of 34 babies born over a 10-year period complained that inadequate treatment had left their children brain-damaged. Two of them died. One family later received a £1.25 million settlement after their son was left handicapped.

Callum, weighing just 1lb 6oz, was taken to the infirmary, but died shortly afterwards in his father's arms. His mother was still being treated by a midwife at her parents' house and discovered her son had died when she arrived at the hospital. She said: "I walked in to find Kieran holding Callum. I'm just so angry."

Kevin Hughes, the Labour MP for Doncaster North, who lives close to the Welches said he was writing to Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary.

Mrs White's parents, who say they helped deliver the boy in their front room, rejected a statement by the hospital's controlling NHS trust that Mrs White discharged herself against medical advice.

David Welch, her father, said: "It is all complete lies. My daughter did not ask to go



Gemma White and her husband, Kieran. Their baby lived for only three hours on Christmas Day

Girl climbs into drain to save missing dog

By PAUL WILKINSON

A GIRL of 11 has rescued her missing dog by climbing into a water-filled storm drain. Jennifer Dobson's four-year-old border terrier, Sandy, disappeared from her home in Newcastle upon Tyne three weeks ago. She and her brother, Christopher, 15, had scoured the streets looking for it. Christopher walked for so long he lost a stone in weight. But with temperatures below zero the chances of finding it safe seemed slim until, last weekend, a neighbour heard a faint whimpering coming from a storm drain. When he lifted the manhole cover he saw Sandy 12ft below and went to tell its owner. Miss Dobson had no hesitation in climbing into the culvert to rescue her pet.

Yesterday she said: "Having Sandy back is the best



Jennifer Dobson reunites with Sandy

Christmas present I could have wished for. Nothing would have stopped me getting into the drain to save him. Sandy recognised me straight away. He was really weak but he still managed to jump up and lick my face because he was so pleased to see me."

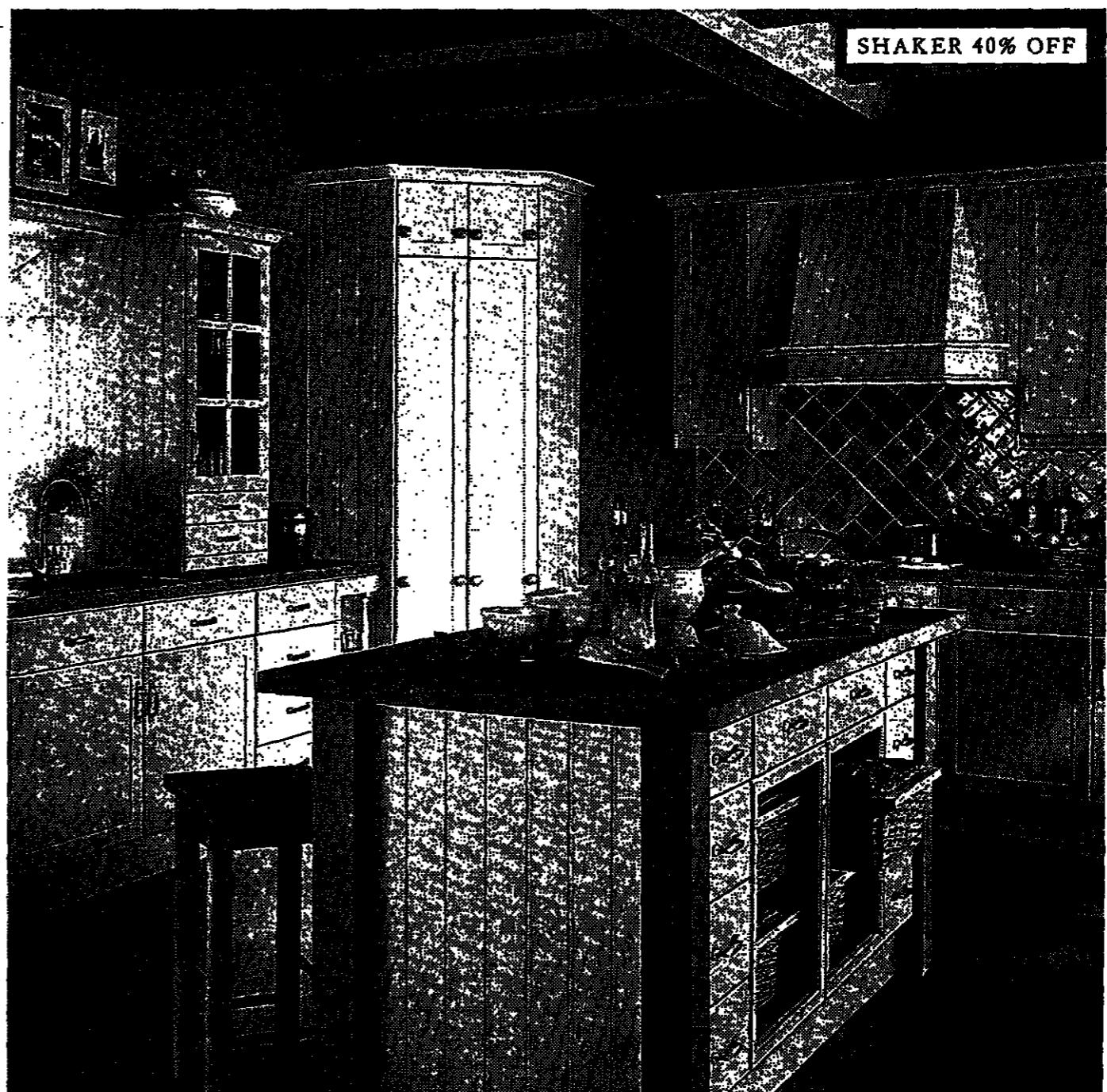
"It could have been dangerous climbing down the

ladder into the drain but I just knew I had to get Sandy. It was such a wonderful feeling to find him alive after so long that I felt my heart would burst."

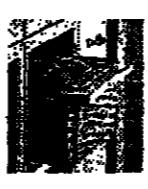
Her mother, Lynn, said: "Sandy has been checked by the vet who is amazed he survived so long. We don't know how Sandy got down the drain but if appears he has survived on drinking rain water. Most dogs would have died in the freezing conditions but Sandy must have an incredible will to live. He's now fighting his way back to health and he has enjoyed a good night's sleep, snuggled up in bed with Jennifer."

"He is still weak and we have had to carry him upstairs because he is too tired to walk. But he is starting to play with his ball and the love we are giving him is helping his full recovery."

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Former pupils condemn 'bitchy' all-girl schools

A DECLINE in demand for single-sex schools was forecast yesterday after a survey of past pupils showed few would choose them for their own children.

Just a third of students educated at boys-only or girls-only schools said they wanted the same education for their child. In contrast, almost all those questioned who went to mixed schools wanted the same experience for their offspring.

The finding by the Centre for Education and Employment Research, based at Brunel University, follows its analysis of examination results which claimed that single-sex schools did little to enhance pupils' results, despite their dominance of league tables.

Professor Alan Smithers, director of the centre, said the survey showed single-sex schools were

■ The authors of a survey of 19-year-olds disenchanted with their education predict a decline in single-sex schools, David Charter reports

outdated, rather than in terminal decline. "Separation did not occur for educational reasons, it occurred for social reasons which have long since passed," said Professor Smithers.

"In state education, the belief was that boys were being educated for work and girls for the home," he said. "In the independent sector, boys were sent away to be educated while girls were taught at home by governesses. When girls' education was established it imitated the pattern for boys."

The introduction of comprehen-

sive schools in the 1960s saw most schools go co-educational, leaving behind highly selective single sex grammar schools. This explained their dominance of examination tables, he said.

Professor Smithers added: "Increasingly it is being regarded as more natural and normal for the sexes to be educated together in secondary education."

His team interviewed 100 students in their first year at university about their school experiences. Many girls from single-sex schools complained about the competitive

ness and "spitefulness" of an all-girl atmosphere, although some valued being pushed academically.

Typical comments included: "All these girls together were so competitive. The smallest little spelling test and there was mass hysteria over what marks you got."

One girl said: "It was a bit bitchy because it was all girls, but without boys there was less of a distraction."

Another commented: "Not seeing boys in a working environment, you only ever saw them as a possible romantic thing. You were never looking for them as a friend."

Some girls from mixed schools said boys tended to dominate lessons, while another said: "The boys didn't dominate the lessons, rather the girls ... the boys didn't get a look in." Boys who went to

PARENTS OF TRUANTS GIVEN PAGERS

Parents of regular truants are being issued with pagers so they can be alerted immediately if their children miss a lesson. The scheme in County Durham will be studied by government advisers and may be extended nationally if it improves attendance. It is one of 119 local authority programmes given backing from a £22 million government fund announced

yesterday. Stephen Byers, the Schools Standards Minister, said the projects would help ministers to find new approaches in tackling disaffection among teenagers. In Walsall, near Birmingham, pupils are to be given school passes to monitor attendance. In Devon, council officials plan to appoint "return to school" tutors to work with truants.

with the opposite sex. Of the girls educated in single-sex schools, 38 per cent wanted the same for their children. 20 per cent co-educational schools, 18 per cent wanted mixed sixth form education and 24

per cent had no preference. Among boys, nearly 30 per cent wanted single-sex schooling for their child, 30 per cent wanted mixed and 11 per cent co-educational after 16, while nearly 30 per cent were undecided.

Margaret Riddle, past president of the Girls' Schools Association, said: "There does not seem to be a decline at the moment in parental interest in single-sex schools. You could also argue that the decline in the maintained sector was not driven by market forces but was a policy decision."

She added: "Maybe when these young people become parents other factors will come into play. The views of 19-year-olds are not the same as 39-year-olds when they have their own children's future to think about."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Date is set for au pair's appeal

Louise Woodward, the 19-year-old au pair from Elton, Cheshire, has been given a date for appeals against her conviction for the manslaughter of eight-month-old Matthew Eappen. She could know in a little over two months if she faces a minimum 15-year sentence or whether she will be free to return home.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court is to hear appeals on March 6 from Miss Woodward and the prosecution. Opening arguments will be lodged by January 20. Briefs arguing against the appeals will be filed by February 17 with replies lodged ten days later.

Victim ignored

Burglars are thought to have ignored a man lying in a diabetic coma while they ransacked his flat. James Mather, 52, of Sunderland, was discovered after neighbours contacted police about the break-in. He was taken to hospital where he died the next day.

Airliner alert

An airline carrying 173 passengers made an emergency landing at Birmingham International Airport after the pilot discovered problems with a landing flap. The 757 Britannia Airways plane, en route from Faro, Portugal, to Manchester, landed safely.

Cell death

Police have launched an inquiry into the death of a man who collapsed in custody. Robert Hughes, 24, of Carlisle, was found in his cell two hours after he arrived at Lancaster police station on Boxing Day to help with inquiries into a breach of the peace.

Monet all-day

The Royal Academy of Arts in London plans to open 24 hours a day for a Monet exhibition in 1998. The move follows the success of late-night opening for its *Sensation* exhibition, which attracted 300,000 visitors up to its closure on Sunday.

Vanished

Police are hunting thieves who stole a garden shed from a house in Dorset. The complete 6ft x 4ft structure was taken, along with its contents including fishing tackle and a bicycle from the back garden of Russell Langley's house in the hamlet of Woodey.

Age no barrier

A woman of 96 is one of Britain's oldest first-time authors. Margie Jenkins, of Esher, Surrey, has had *Fun at Bedtime for Little People*, stories and poems for children, written as a reaction against violent entertainment, published by the Book Guild.

Festive double

Cherry Miller, 36, of Downend, Bristol, has given birth to two sons on Christmas Day — six years apart. Mrs Miller's latest son, as yet unnamed, is a brother for Jacob. She and her husband, Paul, 38, also have a daughter, Corinne, 3.

CORRECTION

A report ("High-flying union official grounded after hitting rival", April 9) concerning a British Airways union official, Michael Coleman, incorrectly stated that he earned more than £120,000 a year. His earnings are approximately £42,000. The article also wrongly said that Mr Coleman spat at and punched a rival union official. We apologise for these errors.

Murals in the cathedral cast new light on early worship

An astonishing array of painting and sculpture has been uncovered by scholars, reports Dalya Alberge



The Chapter House at Worcester Cathedral

SPECTACULAR medieval wall paintings and sculptures, some of which have lain hidden for centuries, have been discovered at Worcester Cathedral.

Paintings dating from 1090 — among the oldest images in the country — to 1500 have emerged. Although the majority are relatively small or faint fragments, they cast dramatic light on the cathedral and worship in the Middle Ages in that they suggest much of the interior was painted in vivid colours.

The discoveries were made by a team from the Courtauld Institute headed by David Park, a leading scholar of wall painting. He was struck by the extraordinary amount of painting that survives in what seems to be a relatively pain-free building. The masonry appears to be untouched, bare stone, but conservators discovered paintings everywhere — from down in the depths of the crypt to around the highest capitals.

Descriptions of rosettes, foliage, details of faces and drapery have been found throughout. "In fact, so much has survived you can get a good idea of how it looked through the Middle Ages," Mr Park said.

In the chapter house they

found evidence showing that each of a series of niches once featured busts of angels holding books; he explained that Worcester was once part of a monastery and monks would have sat in those niches.

Perhaps the most exciting image is a 1200s head of an angel whose quality, he said, was unsurpassed by any English painting of the 13th century.

Scholars and the clergy are also particularly impressed by

the project resulted in the rediscovery of a major collection of polychromed and other medieval sculptures. These and other fragments of medieval stonework, which may even include a section of St Wulstan's shrine, are of extraordinary significance," Mr Park's report to the Dean and Chapter says. Worcester cathedral was originated by St Wulstan in 1084.

Many of the finds date from the early 13th century; some were almost missed as they had been placed so high up in the triforium in the nave and the choir; close study showed that sculptures of bishops and angels — a precursor of Lincoln Cathedral's famous angel choir — had once been painted. Among beautifully carved images of kings, queens and angels, they found a large black frog on the pagan-style shield of a king. "A frog in the Middle Ages signified evil,"



A fragment of early 13th-century decoration from the cathedral. The amount of painting has surprised experts

Mr Park said. "That makes him evil. That means the cycle is evil. To be reinterpreted. They are not all goodies up there. He may be an anti-Christ or Satan. His legs are also crossed, another sign of evil. So the whole scheme is more interesting."

Mr Park expressed amazement at a "great find" of 14th-century sculptures piled up in a cluttered storeroom above the giftshop. It could be reached only by a ladder from

the cloisters. Among them are 14th-century figures of a couple leaning over a parapet watching passers-by.

Scholars are particularly excited by fragments on the 1216 tomb of St John, whose will of 1209 expressed his wish to be buried between the shrines of St Oswald and St Wulstan — which were both destroyed during the Dissolution of the monasteries. Mr Park said that there had been a vigorous debate in the 19th century over

whether the marble effigy was painted red originally, ruling against that theory, the Victorians had gilded the entire piece. The gilding was removed in the 1930s, but fragments discovered by the Courtauld team prove that the effigy was bright red.

Although many of the finds emerged during a two-year survey that has just been completed, much of the material had been discovered in the mid-1980s by the cathedral

archaeologists but not fully studied until now. Their work is the most thorough survey of its kind undertaken by an English cathedral.

The Dean of Worcester, the Very Rev Peter Marshall, said:

"We are only just beginning to get our minds around all the information, and it inspires and warms our hearts as we come to recognising the rich inspiration of those people who, in this way, expressed the vision of their faith."

Date set for issue of Diana stamps

THE long-awaited stamps to commemorate the life of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, will be on sale from February 3. Apart from the Royal Wedding stamps of July 1981, commemorating the wedding of the Prince and Princess of Wales, they will be the only set issued in Britain with the Queen's image on them.

The £20-million print run will double the previous record set for royal commemorative stamps: 60 million were released after the wedding. The special issue is expected to raise several

million pounds for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund which will receive all profits.

Design and production of the five stamps started in the week of the Princess's death but the Post Office said then that the release had been delayed at the wish of the Spencer family.

The 26p first-class stamps show photographs of the Princess by Lord Snowdon, Tim Graham, John Stillwell and Terence Donovan (Lord Snowdon took two of the pictures). They feature

formal and informal poses and each stamp has a purple border as a mark of respect.

The Queen's head and the value are also shown in purple, and the stamps are subtitled with the dates 1961-1997. John Roberts, chief executive of the Post Office, said: "We hope that there will be a considerable demand for the stamps so that the memorial fund can benefit by millions of pounds."

Buckingham Palace made it clear that the timing of the release was a matter between the Royal Mail and the

Princess's family. A Kensington Palace spokesman said that the family were "delighted" with the design of the stamps and welcomed the issue.

Peter Jennings, a leading stamp collector who has campaigned for the stamps' early release, said he was delighted that the "magnificent" stamps would soon be on sale. Mr Jennings, a fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society, said: "These stamps will be a great find of 14th-century sculptures piled up in a cluttered storeroom above the giftshop. It could be reached only by a ladder from

November 29, six weeks prematurely, but was allowed home only on Christmas Eve. Mrs English said: "If I was due to die next year at least I have had the joy of holding her, which is what I have prayed for."

An Imperial Cancer Research Fund spokesman said:

"Spontaneous remissions in cancer do happen, but only very rarely. A patient's beliefs can be a source of strength or comfort in coping with a terminal cancer or helping to combat cancer that is treatable. Some cancers of course are more susceptible to chemotherapy than others which are more aggressive."

Professor Reg Hall, lead physician on the Northern Cancer Network, based in Newcastle, said: "It's an absolutely lovely story, especially for the family who believe it is a miracle. We know in scientific terms that the progress of a cancer is very variable."

Rebecca was born on

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The set of stamps showing photographs by Lord Snowdon, Tim Graham, John Stillwell and Terence Donovan goes on sale on February 3.

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Explorers to seek Atlantis in Bolivia

Globetrotting family record

Globetrotting family reaches record books

FOR the past seven years a tiny horse-drawn caravan has been home to a Scottish family while they made a record-breaking round-the-world journey.

Three children and their parents have crossed three continents to become the first people to make continuous circumnavigation of the world in a horse-drawn vehicle.

The Grant family and a succession of horses endured illness, political upheaval and war on their 12,360-mile overland trip. But now, back in Scotland, they face a struggle against poverty. A court case in Mongolia and expulsion from China both hit their finances and they only managed to complete the trip thanks to some kindly benefactors.

David and Kate Grant and their children Torcui, 17, Eilidh, 16, and Fionn, 13, are being put up at a Scottish hotel by a sponsor until the middle of January but then they may have to return to their caravan because they say they are unable to claim benefits.

Their adventure began in August 1990 when the family sold their house in Orkney for £40,000 and decided to satisfy their wanderlust. At Letham Grange Hotel near Arbroath yesterday Mrs Grant said that they had thought up the trip after becoming bored with a humdrum lifestyle. "We both like travel and thought where can we go with a young family."

Inspiration came when they saw an advertisement for horse-drawn holidays. Mr Grant, who gave up his job as a wildlife management ecologist, said they had hoped the journey would "give the children a slightly different education from that supplied by the national curriculum".

Their caravan was built by a local funeral director to a design sketched on the back of an envelope by Mr Grant and at low points Mrs Grant says she felt it was "a bit like a coffin". She missed 18 months

Couple bored by humdrum lifestyle took children on the road for world trip

of the trip when she returned home twice because of illness and family problems.

The family said the saddest moment of the journey came when Traceur, the horse that pulled their caravan for over 10,000 miles, died. Their first horse had proved too light. Traceur pulled the caravan from France across Europe and Asia and in America to the Missouri where he died of a brain tumour.

In Mongolia three drunken men had tried to steal the horse. To frighten them, Mr Grant fired a few catapult shots over their heads. Later one of the men claimed he had been hit in the eye leading to a protracted court case. When charges were finally dropped Mr Grant was still forced to pay £750 for the complainant's medical expenses.

Earlier in the trip, the family had to flee from Slovenia when war broke out in the former Yugoslavia in 1991. A tractor was commandeered to pull them to safety in Austria as snipers' bullets flew.

Their money troubles continued in China where £6,000 of their budget was eaten up when they were ordered to leave the country. Mr Grant said the authorities were unable to explain why they had to go. "All roads were closed to foreigners. It was two weeks before the UN women's conference. I just thought security had flipped."

Their money problems were later partly alleviated when Mr Peter Liu, who owns

Letham Grange Hotel, read about their plight in a newspaper and offered to become a sponsor. He joined their main sponsor, Grant's of Dalve, and eventually the family were able to secure passage from Japan to America.

The young Grants have journeyed through three continents and 15 countries but the only schooling they received was during two terms in a Slovenian school. They have also studied through distance learning.

Fionn now wants to live anywhere that plays basketball while Eilidh has discovered a talent for horse riding and plans to train as a jockey in Berkshire. Torcui said: "It has been a great experience. I haven't actually done any O levels, but I will probably do them at some point."

Mr Grant, who boosted the family's income by writing occasional articles, is working on a book about their trip.



The Grant family with the horse-drawn caravan that took them round the world; now it may become home again

Handler will leave best friend behind

By DANIEL McGRORY

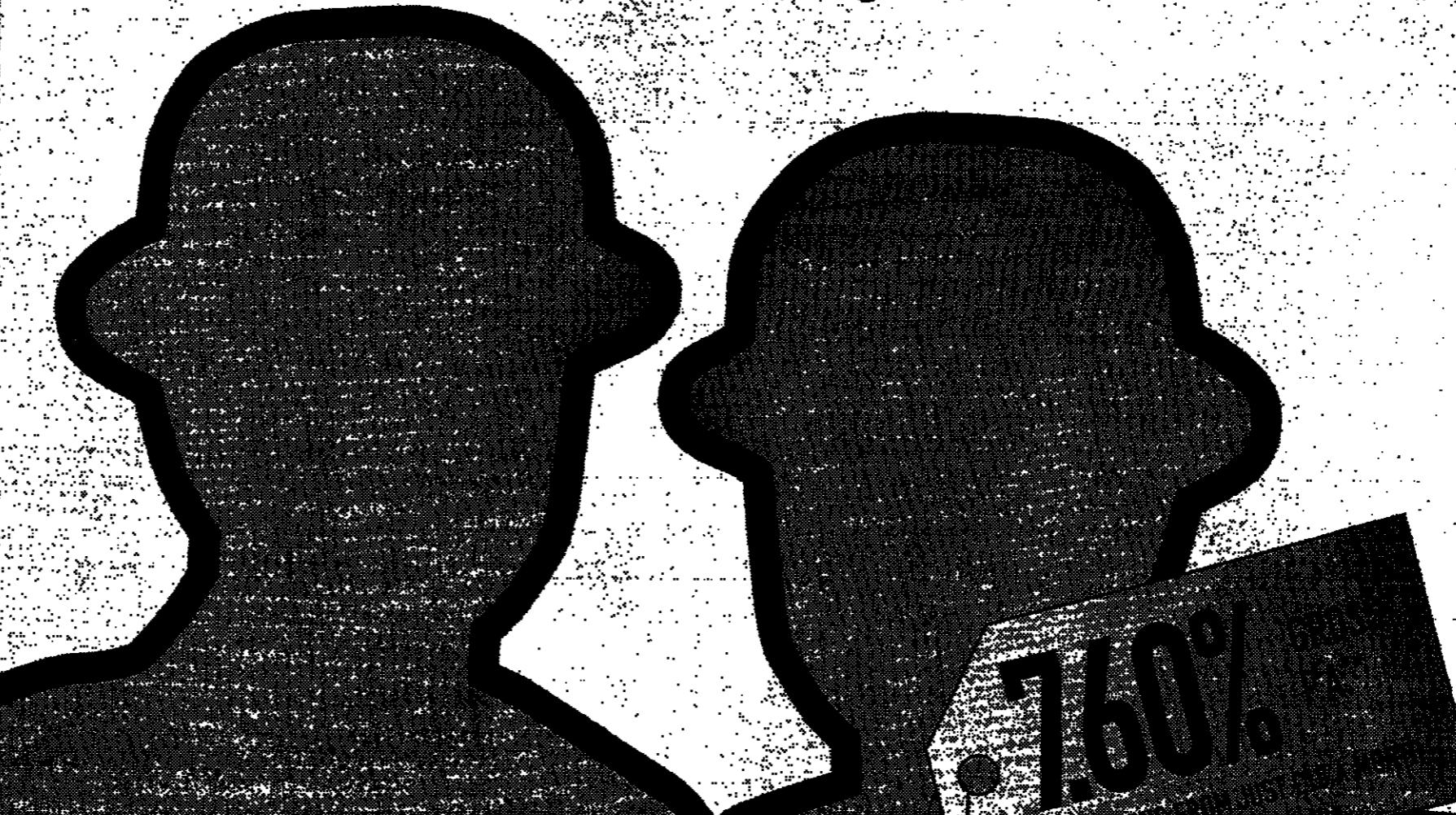
A POLICE dog handler who is helping to search for the remains of a Royal Marine believed to have been murdered on the Falkland Islands will have to leave his dog behind after the venture.

Sergeant Mick Swindells and his border collie Lee, who are based in Blackpool, will lead the hunt next month for Alan Addis, who disappeared 17 years ago. Quarantine regulations will force Sergeant Swindells to leave the dog, which can detect graves and provide crucial evidence.

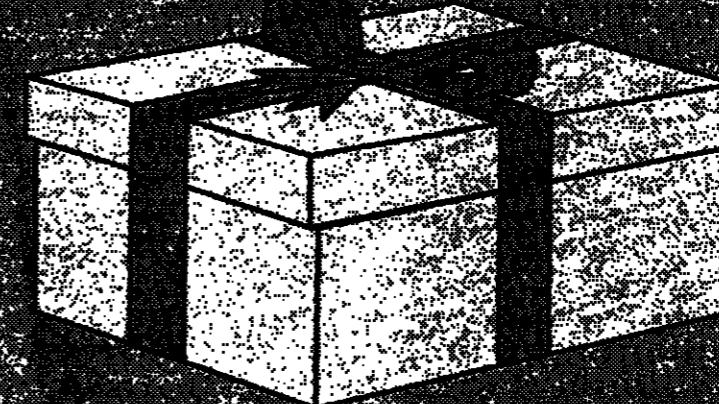
"It will be a tremendous wrench to part with Lee after five years of working with him but he could be the key to this mystery," Sergeant Swindells said. "He would be in quarantine for six months so it would be kinder to let him stay and work with the Falklands police."

Local detectives believe the 19-year-old commando was killed on the orders of a prominent islander who accused him of having an affair with his wife.

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Explorers to seek Atlantis in Bolivia

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A MAP expert's theory that the remains of the lost city of Atlantis are in Bolivia is to be put to the test by an international expedition led by the British explorer, Colonel John Blashford-Snell.

Jim Allen of Torquay, an amateur archaeologist who trained as a photographic interpreter with the RAF, has spent more than 14 years trying to pinpoint the fabled city's location. He is convinced that it was built on and around Lake Poopo in the shadow of the Andes.

Mr Allen's research, based on a detailed study of satellite and aerial images where he has tried to match the Greek philosopher Plato's ancient description of the city with



Col Blashford-Snell: expedition leader

natural features on the globe, won favour with Colonel Blashford-Snell after being aired in *The Times* in February.

In March the explorer and 20 colleagues from Britain, America and Bolivian archaeological centres are to sail from Lake Titicaca down the Desaguadero River to Lake Poopo.

Here they plan to investigate an ancient canal-like

feature which Mr Allen claims is man-made and gave the Atlanteans access to the sea from where they crossed to North Africa and the Mediterranean to trade.

The journey will be made in traditional dragon-headed reed boats which are under construction at Lake Titicaca.

The expedition, which will also study settlements of the Tiwanaku Indians en route, expects to arrive at Lake Poopo in April.

Mr Allen said many classical scholars were convinced that Atlantis was a myth or, if it did exist, was in the Mediterranean near Gibraltar.

But he said there was compelling evidence from local place-names, a more sympathetic study of the Plato text, and satellite imagery that it was on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean in Antisyo, the ancient name of modern-day Bolivia.

*Source Moneyfacts Publications and correct as of 16/12/97. Interest rates are variable. **The 7.60% gross p.a. rate applies where 12 equal consecutive monthly payments are made to the account in a year (January to December) and the account remains open on the anniversary. If less than 12 monthly payments are made or the account is closed prior to its anniversary the rate will be 3.60% gross p.a. Interest is paid on anniversary. Interest will be paid after deduction of income tax at the lower rate of 20% or, subject to the normal qualification, gross. Any withdrawal during the 3 year term must be to close the account. Only one account per person. Branch cash withdrawal limit £750 and £250 at Local Agencies. T&Cs apply. Terms and conditions available on request at our branches. Bradford & Bingley is a member of the Building Societies Ombudsman Scheme and subscribes to the Code of Banking Practice. Bradford & Bingley Building Society, Main Street, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 2LW

Birds take flight as orchards vanish

Intensive farming, fuelled by EU grants, is driving out some of the countryside's most familiar species, reports Nick Nuttall

THE destruction of old and traditional orchards is contributing to a decline in birdlife, scientists have found.

Surveys comparing modern, intensively managed orchards with old ones have found that numbers of birds and the variety of species are far greater where there are traditionally managed trees.

Dr Joe Crocker, one of the study scientists, said: "Old orchards foster a more abundant and diverse wildlife. The number of birds doubled in orchards where trees were more than 25 years old, he said. The findings indicate that the trend towards grubbing up old orchards in favour of new ones or other crops, fuelled by European agricultural grants, is contributing to the decline of some bird populations.

Dr Crocker, whose main work is on the effects of pesticides on the countryside, said urgent research was needed to see if the difference between old and new orchards was because of habitat or levels of pesticides.

"People see them orchards as pretty places and generally benign. But modern orchards are a high-tech business," said Dr Crocker, who is based at the Government's Central Science Laboratory in York.

Trees are planted in rows, are heavily pruned and are likely to receive frequent sprays during the season of fungicides, insecticides and herbicides. "Your average Cox's Orange Pippin will get 17 sprays before the apple

leaves the orchard," he said. In contrast, an old traditional orchard may receive just one or two sprays and few if any fungicides. News of the research comes as horticulturalists are preparing to offer growers nearly 150 lost varieties of apples, known from the medieval and early Christian period, which have been rediscovered in parks and gardens in Ireland.

The varieties, with names like Bloody Butcher, Red Brandy and Apple Jack — mentioned by Falstaff in Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part II*, are being grown from seed at University College Dublin.

It is believed that the genes in the old varieties could boost modern ones and help cut back on the need for pesticides. Many of the older varieties are naturally resistant to modern-day pests such as scab, mildew and canker.

The varieties in old orchards may be less productive but more robust at dealing with pest attacks, and farmers often manage them alongside livestock which grazes underneath the trees.

Their dung increased the availability of insect food for birds as did the reduced use of herbicides, which increased the range and numbers of flowers. The age of the trees meant there were likely to be more holes for nesting birds and the older, more gnarled barks probably housed more insect and sap food.

Dr Crocker, a member of the British Ecological Society, and his team surveyed 109

orchards in Hereford and Worcester. They carried out ten-minute surveys of hedges and trees, counting the number and species of birds and flowers. Not only were there twice as many birds in the older orchards but there were more species.

Both old and new orchards held common birds such as blue tits and chaffinches. But the older ones also held less

common birds, such as woodpeckers and little owls.

James Marsden of English Nature, who owns an old orchard in Much Marcle, Hereford and Worcester, said the findings confirmed his own surveys of his two-acre plot and of his neighbour's more substantial orchard.

"The modern bush orchard is a desert in comparison," he said. He and his neighbour

had scores of species including green, lesser spotted and greater spotted woodpeckers, tree creepers, roosting buzzards and goshawks.

"Our yields are nowhere near as heavy as in a modern bush orchard. But you have to look at this in the round. There should be a value on landscape and wildlife rather than just on maximum production," he said.

AN "eco" label for fruit is being promoted by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) to generate support for old varieties of fruit and traditionally managed orchards (writes Nick Nuttall).

Jim Dixon, senior policy officer specialising in agriculture at the RSPB, said that in Germany apples produced in old orchards now carried such labels. "They say, 'by buying this apple consumers are saving these birds, animals and plants,'" he said.

But Mr Dixon said reforms were needed in the way farmers were subsidised and funded for environmental-friendly agricultural schemes, under national programmes and those initiated under the European Common Agricultural Policy.

He said the Forest Stewardship scheme, promoted by



"There should be a value on landscape and wildlife, rather than just on maximum production," says James Marsden, who owns an old orchard.

Biologist stumbles on colony of alien crabs

BIOLOGISTS at the University of Wales have discovered a huge colony of South American dwarf crabs at Cardiff Docks.

Dr Chris Mettam spotted the crabs by chance while looking at worms in the area with a colleague.

It is thought the *rhithropanopeus harrisi* may have arrived in Wales via the Netherlands, where boats from across the Atlantic have started a thriving population of the crabs, which have white claws and are the size of a fingernail.

The two biologists also discovered another "alien invader", a mussel which they think comes from West Africa. "We think these alien species come in as larvae in the ballast water of ships," said Dr Mettam.

"We are not sure how long the crabs have been here but, from scraping samples we have taken, the colony now numbers possibly hundreds of thousands.

"I was showing my colleague, Dr Jorg Hardige, some worms in the area when we discovered them.

"It is a great bonus to find them because Dr Hardige is working on research into pheromones, and how animals use them to send messages, and this species has been used to that end in the past."

The crab species is currently confined to the Roath basin and sheltered areas in the docks but Dr Mettam, 54, believes the building of the Cardiff Bay Barrage could encourage them to spread. "There will be more river water behind the barrage and it will be less salty, which they like," he said.

"We also don't know for sure what effect on the local crab population it would have if the colony got out of the docks and spread, so we are keeping an eye on it. Further research needs to be done on that, but it is not thought that they would cause a great deal of harm."



Much Marcle's birds: from left, the little owl, green woodpecker, lesser spotted woodpecker, greater spotted woodpecker, tree creeper and goshawk

RSPB WANTS FRIENDLY FRUIT LABELLED



the Ministry of Agriculture to encourage farmers to manage forests, including orchards, for wildlife, was excellent but lacked finance. Its budget of £21 million could be spent "many times over". Meanwhile, the Government spent £3 billion on the common agricultural policy which subsidised farmers to maximise production of crops through intensive, environmentally damaging, agriculture.

Battleship gunner turned traitor for love and money

Michael Evans on the sailor who betrayed the fleet to Kaiser's Germany

A SAILOR who was seduced into spying by the wife of a German agent earned a fortune for the secrets he betrayed, according to newly released MI5 files covering the pre-First World War period.

George Parrott, the only Englishman to be put on trial for spying for the Germans before the war began, was chief gunner of the battleship HMS *Agamemnon*. He became one of the highest-paid agents recruited by the German secret intelligence service during the lead-up to war.

The MI5 files, released by the Public Record Office, belie the widespread belief that the Germans were poor payers. Warrant Officer Parrott was paid £500 in 1910 for a naval manoeuvres report for 1909 — the equivalent of more than £23,000 today.

Soon after he was recruited in 1910, Parrott handed over four volumes of a Navy report on gunnery in 1908 and 1909, for which he was paid £40 — about £1,500 today.

The MI5 files underline the professionalism of the Germans, and the way in which

they were successful that, by the summer of 1910 Parrott was providing details of exercises off Portland, battle practice at sea and other naval manoeuvres involving *Agamemnon*.

MI5 discovered that at one point Parrott smuggled Karl Hentschel on board *Agamemnon* and showed him the guns. Later, Patricia Hentschel persuaded him to remove Navy gunnery instruction manuals and the handbook of a six-inch gun.

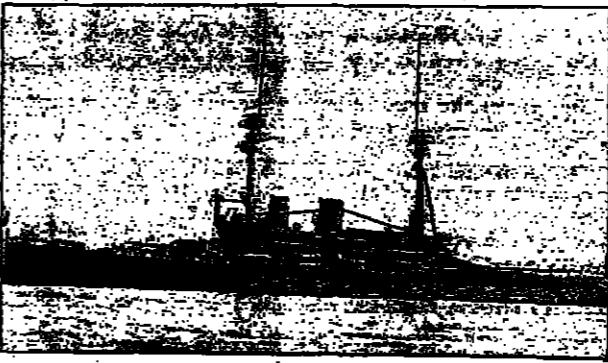
But when the Germans asked him to provide a com-

plete list of classified manuals and documents on navy ships, Parrott at first refused "but after being threatened with exposure, he agreed on condition nothing was put in writing", the MI5 files reveal.

In March 1911 Parrott and Hentschel quarrelled over money and the German's jealousy over his spy's relationship with his wife. Parrott also came under suspicion after his mail was intercepted in 1912, and, although there was insufficient evidence to charge him, he was sacked from the Navy in 1912.

Parrott was sentenced to four years in prison after being arrested subsequently with an incriminating letter from the Germans. His wife received a pension from the German secret service.

German agents recruited in occupied territory to spy on Britain were taught in Antwerp by a "fair woman" known as Baroness Jeanne, Fraulein Doktor and Madame Slaghmuiden. An MI5 file of 1917 said she trained agents to learn questions by heart because of fear of police raids.



Parrott was the chief gunner on HMS *Agamemnon*

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Botha's defiance of law pushes South Africa towards new era of strife



Botha refuses to obey call from the truth commission

Nelson Mandela's decision to bow out as president of the African National Congress and soon as South Africa's President clearly heralds the end of an era of reconciliation in which he has played the leading role.

As South Africa enters the new year, it is bracing itself for the possibility of an awful symmetry — that the curtain may be brought down on that era of reconciliation by the jailing of another former President, P.W. Botha, who ruled from 1978 to 1989.

Mr Botha, 81, carried through such notable reforms as abolition of the pass laws but is universally remembered as the unyielding boss of apartheid South Africa, die

Mandela's former nemesis could end up in jail for failing to make amends for his role in apartheid, R.W. Johnson writes

Groot Krokodil (the Great Crocodile) of a thousand cartoons. He has contemptuously refused to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, claiming he has nothing to apologise for. The commission has responded by subpoenaing Mr Botha to appear before it — a summons he has ignored. His lawyer has made lengthy written representations of Mr Botha's answers to questions posed by the

commission, claiming that this should be enough.

Frank Kalm, Attorney-General of the Western Cape, has let it be known he will allow things to rest until January 2. But if Mr Botha maintains his position he could be sentenced to up to two years' jail.

Mr Botha has entertained both

Mr Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the commission chairman, to tea at his home at Wilderness, on the Cape coast, and greeted them with great warmth. For Mr Botha, that was evidence enough of his goodwill, but Mr Mandela and Archbishop Tutu have appealed to him to appear before the commission, and profess themselves disappointed that he has chosen to disobey the law.

Opinion is divided. For many blacks, Mr Botha is the symbol of all they most hate and they feel that, given the many atrocities shown by the commission to have taken place under his rule, he is being let off too lightly as it is. He makes no plea of ignorance, but merely says he did what he had to do to oppose communist-backed terrorism. For many Afrikaners, however, Mr

Botha has become a symbolic figure of pride and resistance.

They agree with him that all the commission wants to do

is to humiliate him publicly. They also point bitterly to the undoubted bias the commission has shown towards the ANC — giving amnesty, for example, to 37 of its leaders without them even fulfilling the legal requirements for personal appearances and full disclosure before the commission.

A new element has entered the drama with the detention by President Chiluba of his predecessor as President of Zambia, Kenneth

Kaunda, who is 73. South Africa is one of many countries to have protested vehemently against this treatment of an aged former head of state. Comparison with Mr Botha is inevitable. Dr Kaunda once jailed Mr Chiluba, just as Mr Botha kept Mr Mandela in jail.

What makes the jailing of Mr Botha particularly problematic is the possibility that he, like Dr Kaunda, might well go on hunger strike. For the Government to back down now would involve an unacceptable loss of face and a bitter blow to black pride, but if Mr Botha were to die in jail many Afrikaners would never forgive the ANC, and the era of reconciliation would end in bitter strife.

CORINNE LAFKA / REUTERS

Violence, fraud and floods mar Kenyan elections

FROM DAVID ORR IN NAIROBI

ACCUSATIONS of vote-rigging, misdirection of ballot papers and floods have plagued elections in Kenya, prompting the authorities to extend polling by 24 hours in affected areas. At least three people, including a baby, were killed during election violence.

Tempers became frayed at a number of polling stations yesterday as voters confronted election officials over delays in the process. Ballot papers were delivered late, to wrong locations and, in some cases, not at all.

Charity Ngilu, the only female challenger to President Moi, accused his Kenya African National Union (Kanu) of vote-rigging and said she would challenge the result if the won. This charismatic mid-decades businesswoman will have a fight on her hands; the President, who has already been in office 19 years, is widely expected to be re-

elected. Mrs Ngilu and her supporters stormed electoral offices in central Kiambu district yesterday, took about 1,000 voter cards and drove off, pursued by police. She alleged that the cards, which electors must show before voting, had been bought by Kanu to boost its tally.

Sheikh Khalid Balala, a radical Islamic preacher and opposition politician, was arrested in the coastal city of Mombasa shortly before voting started. Sheikh Balala, who returned to Kenya this year from exile in Germany, had pledged to disrupt the polls, saying they had been rigged by President Moi and Kanu.

There were reports of violence leading to three deaths, including that of a four-month-old baby, in a western district. Flooding in northeastern areas forced the cancellation of voting and electors had

to paddle boats to neighbouring polling stations. The Electoral Commission said stations hit by weather or logistical problems would remain open until this evening.

Mr Moi, 73, who voted near his rural home in central Kenya, said: "We are winning." Mwai Kibaki, his former Vice-President, who is running a distant second,

said: "There is no chance for Moi to win this election even though they [Kanu] are going to attempt some rigging in some places."

Vote-buying by Kanu, common during the campaign, continued yesterday. "I will not vote until my stomach has been serviced," said one man waiting for money at Kisii, in the southwest. People had to

wait two or three hours in hot sun to cast their votes in some constituencies. At a primary school in a Nairobi suburb, police struggled to control crowds who shouted angrily when the wrong ballot papers were delivered.

However, in most places people waited patiently in long queues. At polling stations in

Kajiado in the central Rift Valley, hundreds of brightly dressed Massai queued against a technicolour backdrop of rolling green hills and bougainvillea. Most were illiterate and had to be helped by election agents to put their mark beside their presidential and parliamentary choices.

The Rift Valley is traditionally a Kanu stronghold; the

electoral jet. Mr Moi won more than a third of the vote in the last elections in 1992. To avoid a second-round run-off, he must finish in first place nationally and get a quarter of the vote in at least five of Kenya's eight provinces. The result is due on New Year's Day.

Post-colonial relics, page 14



Massai villagers queue near Kajiado in the Rift Valley yesterday to vote in presidential and parliamentary elections. Many are illiterate and had to ask officials for help

Diver dies in Cape shark attack

FROM INIGO GILMORE
IN CAPE TOWN

A GREAT white shark killed a diver, the latest in a wave of attacks in South Africa which has raised fears among surfers and tourists.

The shark, with a dorsal fin said to measure 40in, is believed to have been responsible for the death on Sunday of an experienced diver, Ian Hill, 39, from Durban. Mr Hill was spearfishing about 400 yards from the shore in about 30ft of water when the shark attacked.

Witnesses told police they saw a fin gliding through the water, followed by sudden thrashing and a pool of blood where Mr Hill had been. The victim's wife and nine-year-old daughter had been waiting on the beach for him to return and are now under sedation. Only Mr Hill's spear gun was retrieved and a helicopter search was called off last night.

The death in Pringle Bay was the first in the Cape Town area in more than a decade. It comes on the heels of a recent spate of shark attacks elsewhere in the country, and has fuelled safety concerns among the thousands of British and other overseas tourists and surfers who have flocked to the sun-soaked Western Cape over the Christmas and new year holidays.

While surfing experts insist such incidents are isolated, they are concerned by the implications of the latest tragedy. They have given a warning that shark activity has increased because of higher sea temperatures. Sharks also had to eat substantially more, because their digestion had speeded up in warmer waters.

Another death has also raised safety concerns among tourists after it was reported that a 65-year-old grandfather watched his wife, 63, trampled and kicked to death by an ostrich on a farm 25 miles outside Cape Town. The couple had taken a short cut through a field when they were attacked.

Israeli police ask for rabbis' help to crush anti-Arab plot

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

HUNDREDS of Jewish extremists are preparing to incite a bloody conflict with Arabs, Israel's senior police officer said yesterday. He called for clear action to stop them.

Inspector-General Assaf Heletz gave his estimate of the number of extremists after the arrest of two Jewish men who allegedly plotted to desecrate an Islamic shrine in Jerusalem.

He appealed to rabbis and right-wing politicians to restrain extremists such as Avigdor Eskin and Haim Pakowitch, who are accused of a plan to throw a pig's head on the Temple Mount during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

"This is not just a war of the Shin Bet [Israeli intelligence agency] and the security forces," he said.

"All the rabbis and all the

people associated with the extreme right wing should denounce this alleged plot by Eskin and his associates. If anyone has reason to believe that somebody intends to commit a serious act, they should inform the authorities and stop whatever is planned before it happens."

Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron, Israel's chief Sephardic rabbi, whose congregation comprises Jews of Oriental origin, was the first to respond to the call to condemn Jewish mili-

tants. In a letter to Yassir Arafat, the Palestinian Authority chairman, he wrote: "We were sad to hear of the criminal plot by extremists who wished to harm the faith and the faithful and inflame relations between the religions. We denounce any attempt and evil thought which could put off peace and friendship." The rabbi also gave his best wishes to Muslim clerics who were preparing to observe Ramadan.

Hassan Tahboub, Palestinian Authority Minister of Religious Affairs, said if any attacks were carried out by Jewish right-wing extremists against al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem's Old City, a furious reaction from the Muslim world could be expected.

Mr Eskin, the key suspect in the case, last night denied through his lawyers any involvement in the alleged plot.

Jerusalem: A bronze statuette of the Greek goddess Athene has been discovered on a beach in northern Israel (Ross Dunn writes).

The relic was found during a survey by the Israeli Government's Antiquities Au-

Ill lawyer delays Kaunda hearing

BY RAY KENNEDY

A CHALLENGE to the detention without trial of Kenneth Kaunda was interrupted dramatically yesterday when a lawyer for Zambia's former President collapsed at the High Court in Lusaka.

Dr Kaunda, 73, pale and tired after refusing food and drink since his arrest on Christmas Day, was sitting near Daniel Isolou when he collapsed while calling for Dr Kaunda to be charged or released.

As orderlies went to the aid of the lawyer, the judge announced that the hearing would be adjourned to Friday. Dr Kaunda, who faces allegations of being involved in a coup plot, was flown back to the maximum security prison near Kabwe, 60 miles north of the capital.

Seoul MPs back financial reforms

Seoul: South Korean MPs yesterday approved 13 financial reform Bills amid reports that foreign lenders had agreed to roll over some existing loans to South Korean banks.

While the developments represented a ray of light amid the financial gloom, figures released yesterday showed a sharp downturn in exports during November. One piece of approved legislation combined supervisory authority over the banking, securities and insurance industry into one agency. (Reuters)

Asian crisis, page 19

Hostility to Prince's visit

Colombo: A group of nationalist Sinhalese, led by a retired Supreme Court judge, is opposing the visit on December 4 by the Prince of Wales for the 50th anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence from Britain, but the Prince's office in London said yesterday his visit would go ahead. The group, known as the National Joint Committee, is critical of Britain for what it calls "the brutal manner in which the British forces crushed" earlier attempts by the island to become independent. (AP)

British air brawler fined

Brisbane: A British tourist was fined \$AUS1,000 (£400) for punching an airline attendant who intervened in a drunken mid-air fight. Bruce Geoffrey Harris, 37, a computer consultant from London, pleaded guilty in the Brisbane Magistrates' Court to assaulting a flight attendant on a British Airways plane flying from Singapore to Brisbane yesterday. The court heard that Harris had been drinking with a fellow passenger when a fight broke out. (AP)

Mrs Gandhi takes plunge

Delhi: Rajiv Gandhi's 51-year-old widow, the Italian-born Sonia Gandhi, right, announced yesterday that she would campaign in the general election in February for her late husband's Congress party (Compt. Kapoor writes). The news was hailed by Congress members as a major boost for the 106-year-old party, whose fortunes have been on the wane recently, with a number of breakaways and desertions by senior leaders.



New leader for Vietnam

Le Kha Phieu, 66, an army lieutenant-general with a reputation as a conservative party man rather than a combat soldier, has been appointed Vietnamese Communist Party Secretary-General, according to party sources yesterday (James Pringle writes). General Phieu was chosen to succeed Do Muoi, 80, a party apparatchik who has held power since 1991, by the party's central committee, the sources said.

Assisi frescoes damaged

Assisi: Frescoes in the earthquake-damaged Basilica of St Francis in this central Italian town suffered a fresh mishap when they were accidentally soaked by water from a waste pipe. Art experts said they believed that the frescoes in the lower basilica, attributed to the school of Giotto and the Roman school, had escaped serious damage. (Reuters)

Liner gives super-rich chance to float businesses

BY MICHAEL DYNES

A BAHAMAS-BASED company and a German shipyard have agreed to build a \$500 million (£312 million) luxury liner where 21st-century international business executives can live and work as they cruise around the world.

The 85,000-tonne liner, one of the largest built, will provide 250 fully-furnished private apartments, along with 180 guest suites, for the world's super-rich and their families, friends, business associates and domestic staff.

At prices ranging from \$1.17 million to \$5.23 million per apartment, excluding an annual maintenance fee between \$6,000 and \$24,000, the new maritime residences will not come cheap. But their potential status as the world's first floating tax haven may help to offset the cost.

The 988ft vessel will also raise safety concerns among tourists after it was reported that a 65-year-old grandfather watched his wife, 63, trampled and kicked to death by an ostrich on a farm 25 miles outside Cape Town. The couple had taken a short cut through a field when they were attacked.



An artist's impression of the liner, with apartments costing up to \$5.83 million

bankers and wealthy divorcees gaffing exotic cocktails accompanied by plates of caviar and foie gras.

ResidenSea Ltd, the consortium of Norwegian shipping and financial companies backing the scheme, insist that satellite communications and the Internet have enabled

businesses to be run from anywhere in the world. This has allowed the company to offer the first cruise liner based on "home ownership rather than rented cabins".

Christened The World, ResidenSea, the new luxury liner will come into operation in the middle of 2000. It will

Pilot on terror flight had only seconds to act

By MICHAEL EVANS

THE pilot of United Airlines Flight 826, bound for Honolulu with 374 passengers and 19 crew, had just seconds to warn everyone to put on their seatbelts before the Boeing 747 flew into a vortex of unexpectedly severe clear air turbulence that forced the jumbo jet to fall 1,000ft.

Many passengers, mostly Japanese holidaymakers, were still walking around or sitting with their belts unfastened when the plane, flying at 33,000ft, dropped on Sunday night. One passenger, a Japanese woman named as Konomi Kataura, 32, was killed as she was thrown upwards and hit the ceiling, and 110, including nine stewardesses, were injured. Food trolleys that had not been stowed also hit the ceiling before falling onto passengers.

The mêlée was videoed by a passenger: it showed an aircraft shaking, and screaming

passengers bouncing against the ceiling, with oxygen masks released above the seats. One passenger said later: "The plane suddenly sank and, bang! people without seat belts were thrown out of their seats."

Passengers, with blood-stained faces and broken bones, were taken to hospital when the plane returned to Narita airport, near Tokyo. United Airlines said ten were injured seriously enough to be kept in hospital.

Seconds before the airline entered the danger zone, it had been flying smoothly; there was no sign of storm clouds. As the plane began to shake and lose altitude, the pilot said: "We have just hit air turbulence and the aircraft descended 300 metres. There is no danger of a crash."

Clear air turbulence is unpredictable and cannot be forecast. Standard radar on the Boeing 747 cannot detect it

because, without water droplets in storm clouds, there is nothing for radar waves to bounce off. The only hint of trouble would have come from a pilot who had already flown through the same airspace or from general information of possible turbulent conditions detailed on the weather chart provided by the Meteorological Office in Washington.

A spokesman for the British Meteorological Office at Bracknell, in Berkshire, said the chart would have listed "slight, moderate and severe" turbulence along the flight path. "But this was obviously very severe." The turbulence was on the edge of a jetstream, a core of strong winds caused by the merging of hot air from the south and cold air from the north, moving at between 150 and 200 knots (230mph).

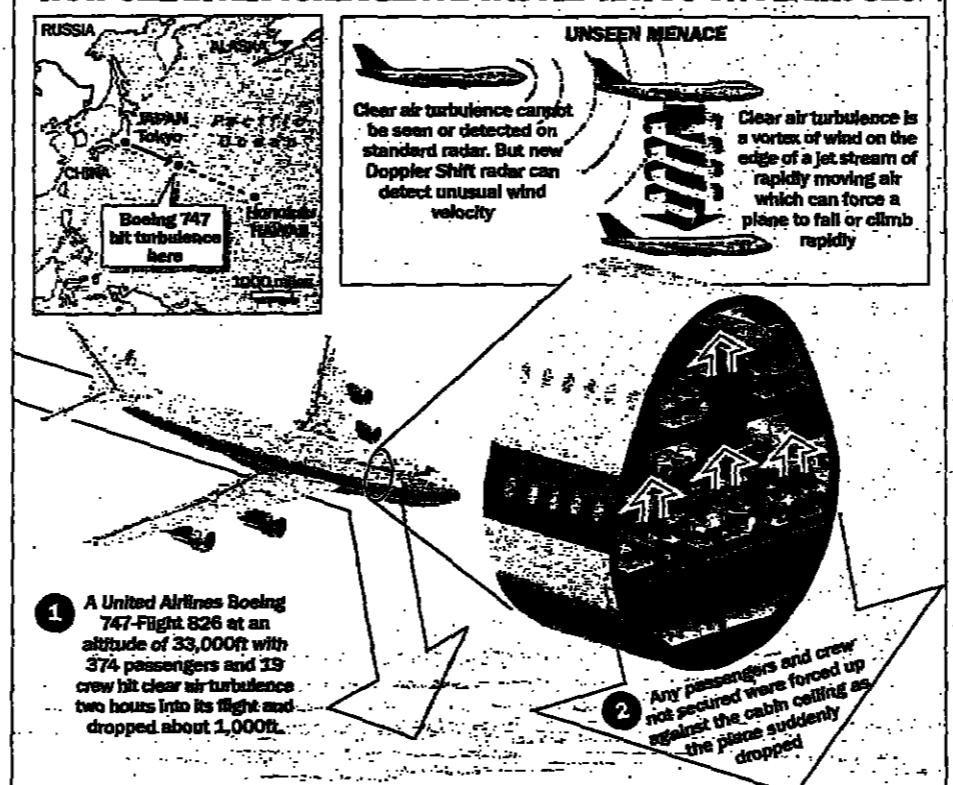
American officials said that the United States National Transportation Safety Board, based in Washington, would investigate the incident, which took place in international airspace over the northern Pacific about 1,100 miles east of Tokyo. Japanese authorities also began interviewing witnesses to determine what procedures were followed and how the incident was handled

by the crew. Some passengers denied the seatbelt sign had been illuminated and this assertion will be at the heart of the investigation into the incident now under way. Tony Molmar, a United Airlines spokesman, said: "The seatbelt sign was on when the plane was hit by severe turbulence. But there had to be folks who weren't belted."

In the most extreme example of such clear air turbulence, in 1966, a BOAC Boeing 707 crashed with the loss of 124 people on board when the airliner was trapped in the lee of Mount Fuji. That was a freak accident. Sunday's incident was also highly unusual because of the severity of the turbulence and the fact that the passengers appeared either to be totally unaware of the imminent danger or had ignored the seatbelt sign. A

spokesman for the British Civil Aviation Authority said aircraft were tested to withstand all weathers, but he stressed that, unless the airline passengers wore seatbelts when they were told to do so, their safety could not be guaranteed.

Passengers aboard United Airlines Flight 826 sit beneath a damaged baggage locker and oxygen masks after their ordeal over the Pacific



US urges passengers to keep seatbelts fastened

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

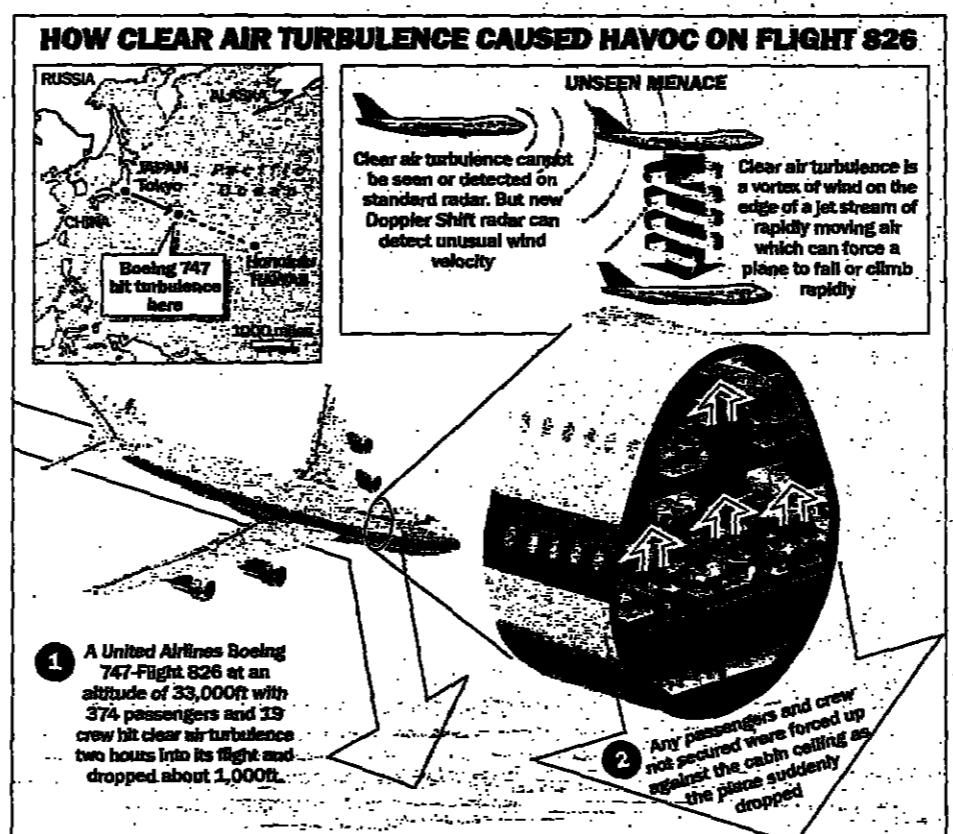
THE death and injuries caused when the United Airlines 747 hit turbulence over the Pacific drew renewed attention yesterday to an American government campaign for passengers to keep their safety belts fastened while seated.

With the slogan "Turbulence happens", the campaign was launched a year ago in the aftermath of two serious incidents. In-flight turbulence is the leading cause of injuries to airline passengers and flight attendants in non-fatal accidents in America, according to the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington. On average, 58 passengers are injured by turbulence in America each year through not wearing seatbelts when the "fasten seatbelt" sign is illuminated.

Between 1981 and 1996, 252

episodes of turbulence affected the larger airlines. As a result, two passengers died, 63 received serious and 863 minor injuries. Those who died were both not wearing seatbelts although the warning sign was lit. Of the 63 seriously injured, 61 were not wearing seatbelts, 59 when the sign was on.

The statistics have persuaded the FAA to declare that most turbulence injuries can be prevented simply by buckling up. The FAA says turbulence can be created – even when the sky appears clear – through a variety of conditions, including atmospheric pressure, jet streams, waves of air flowing around mountains, cold or warm fronts and thunderstorms. Two-thirds of turbulence accidents occur at or above



New radar system can alert pilots to wayward winds

A RADAR system capable of detecting clear air turbulence is being developed by an American company, Allied Signal Aerospace (Michael Evans writes).

David Learmount, operations and safety editor of *Flight International* magazine, said the new system was being developed principally to detect wind shear at low altitudes.

These are dangerously wayward winds that can hit an aircraft as it lands.

One of the secondary benefits of the new system, Mr Learmount said, was that it would also be able to detect clear air turbulence at high altitudes.

The new system operates on a completely different wavelength, he said.

However, he did not believe

it would become compulsory for all commercial airlines to carry the new radar.

"It will be expensive and will mean an increase in ticket costs, and if you get one death from clear air turbulence in ten years out of the 15 billion passengers that will fly over the same period it may not be worth it," he said.

The new system will be based on what is called a Doppler Shift radar that will be able to detect sudden changes in wind velocity.

If an aircraft is flying towards an invisible vortex of wind with a violent down-draft, the new radar will provide an early warning to the pilot.

Military aircraft are already fitted with a Doppler system, but it is not yet available to commercial aircraft.

British executives defy US over Cuba

By JON ASHWORTH
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ABOUT 100 British business men are to fly to Cuba on Air France's first Concorde trip to the country on New Year's Eve to explore investment opportunities. Cuba's news agency reported yesterday.

The visit will be a provocation to the US Administration, which threatens to blacklist any foreigners doing business with President Castro's state. The Helms-Burton Act seeks to blacklist companies which make use of former American-owned assets in Cuba, making it virtually impossible to invest legally in sectors such as sugar and telecommunications, which were once almost entirely US-owned.

The news agency, *Prensa Latina*, yesterday quoted Valentin Rodriguez, director of public relations for the Cuban tourism company Havanatur, as saying the trip was part of his company's effort to promote travel to Cuba from European nations, including Britain, France and Germany. Spaniards and Italians now make up the bulk of the Europeans who visit Cuba.

The Department of Trade and Industry said it had no knowledge of the visit. No DTI officials are involved, and no ministers will be accompanying the business men. The DTI organises regular overseas visits in the hope of creating investment opportunities for British companies.

There is nothing to stop European Union members from investing in Cuba, although pressure from America has limited the flow of potential investors. Cuba is actively seeking foreign direct investment, particularly in banking, construction and industry. Premier, the British oil exploration company, is prospecting for oil and natural gas in Cuba. BAT Industries set up a cigarette joint venture in 1995 after a 35-year absence, while Unilever has formed a joint venture making toiletries.

Caspian states bypass Russia with lucrative export route

Turkmenistan's new gas pipeline could help the area to become the new Gulf, writes Richard Beeston

THE energy-rich Caspian Basin came a step closer to its dream of becoming the new Gulf yesterday, when Iran and the former Soviet republic of Turkmenistan opened a modest, but symbolically important, pipeline.

In a move likely to alter the regional balance of power and the future prosperity of the neglected Caspian nations, President Niyazov of Turkmenistan and President Khatami, his Iranian counterpart, mounted a podium and turned a large wheel to open the new pipeline. The 125-mile link will carry gas from the Turkmen Kordzhe field to the Iranian town of Kord Kuy, just across the border. Although modest in scale, the pipeline could have huge implications well beyond the area. It is the first for the export of energy products that bypasses Russian territory. Moscow has had a stranglehold over the energy-rich nations of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan because it controls the export pipelines.

Turkmenistan, which has the world's third-largest proven reserves of natural gas, was a neglected and impoverished republic under Soviet rule. After the collapse of communism, Moscow made it almost impossible for the country to receive any profit from its gas wealth and, since last spring, Turkmenistan has refused to

export via Russian pipelines. Now, with the export door opened, there are hopes that more ambitious projects will get under way. Over the weekend, the leaders of Turkey, Turkmenistan and Iran authorised Royal Dutch/Shell to go ahead with a feasibility study for a 940-mile pipeline to pump gas from the Central Asia gas fields across northern Iran and on to Turkey, from where it could reach Western markets.

Other proposals include plans for a pipeline to run

south through western Afghanistan to Pakistan, and another on the Caspian Sea bed for the export of gas through Azerbaijan and Georgia to the Black Sea.

America must be watching events with mixed emotions.

Until now Washington has

successfully blocked all attempts by Tehran to become involved in Central Asia. Now,

however, the new moderate Iranian President is signalling,

on his first foreign trip since being elected, that Tehran is eager and able to have a

slice of the largest new energy market in the world. He is not alone, however, and every major player in the international energy market is fighting for a place in the region, where some predict the birth of new Kuwaits and Saudi Arabias in the coming decade.

Last month, Azerbaijan began pumping from a new offshore oilfield and exporting via Chechnya and Russia to the Black Sea coast. Next year it hopes to open a new pipeline through Georgia.

Nevertheless, the Central Asian nations are fearful that war, religious fanaticism and instability could spread from Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

In the volatile Caucasus the threat of violence can never be ignored, particularly since all four nations in the region have unsettled conflicts on their

territory.

□ Power deal: Russia and China yesterday signed a multimillion-pound nuclear power station deal, the first of several planned huge joint projects. In the latest show of

relations between the two former communist

rivals, Li Peng, the Chinese

Prime Minister, greeted Boris

Nemtsov, the Russian Deputy

Prime Minister, for the

signing ceremony. The deal, worth

nearly £2 billion, involves the

construction of two nuclear

reactors in the port city of

Liaoyang, in the eastern

Jiangsu province.

ISLAMABAD: Launching his

journey from prison cell to

parliament in an armoured

personnel carrier, Benazir

Bhutto's husband took the

oath of office as a senator

yesterday – nine months after

he was elected – having won a

court order.

Asif Ali Zardari, who has

been in jail in Karachi since

his wife's Government was

dismissed last year, was flown

to Islamabad, and whisked away

from the airport in a convoy of

police vehicles.

Mr Zardari is being tried for

the murder of Miss Bhutto's

estranged brother, Murtaza,

who died in a hail of police

bullets outside his home in

Karachi, just two months before

her dismissal. Mr Zardari

has denied that he ordered

Murtaza's killing. (AP)



American Medical Association, which shows that California's waitresses have higher death rates from lung disease than any other US female occupational group.

Yet bar owners across the state

are hinting darkly at a campaign of civil disobedience, conjuring visions of Prohibition-style raids by the police and health officials on bars which flout the law.

Beverly Mathis Swanson, the owner of the One Double Oh Club in Santa Cruz said:

"What's next, red meat or coffee?

"We want to respect the law... but

if we end up getting arrested and

Mexico's ruling party denies link to massacre

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

MEXICO'S ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has denied any link with a Mayor charged over the massacre of 45 Indian villagers at Acteal, in the southern state of Chiapas.

The denial follows repeated allegations that the killings on December 22 were carried out by local party loyalists, of whom the Mayor, Jacinto Arias Cruz, whose domain includes Acteal, was one. Prosecutors charge that he provided the weapons used to kill the villagers, mostly women and children, and tried to cover up the incident. Forty people are facing charges in connection with the massacre.

One senior party official compared the killings with the bombing of the United States government building in Oklahoma City.

"If they [the bombers] belonged to one of the political parties, is the Republican or the Democratic Party guilty of the bombing? Of course not," Alfredo Phillips, the party's coordinator of international affairs, told *The New York Times*.

Local indigenous groups, including the rebel Indian Zapatista National Liberation Army, have blamed the Government and President Zedillo. Señor Arias, they say, was merely a pawn in a fight between the PRI and the Zapatistas.

The PRI blames the killings on religious and tribal disputes among various Indian communities in Chiapas.

But human rights groups and opposition politicians say party politics are behind much of the tension and systematic harassment of the Chiapas Indians. A climate of fear has been building for some time, and hundreds have died in clashes between PRI supporters and sympathisers of the Zapatistas.

Services, asking for a clear definition of "enclosed public space". Mr Granlund contends that the definition contained in the no-smoking law – "four walls and a ceiling" – is so ambiguous as to be unenforceable. He argues that bars and casinos should be considered "open spaces" if they keep their doors and windows open.

Inventively, he is also suggesting that owners of such establishments knock down one outer wall. Smokers could thus puff undisturbed, he argues, and California's climate is option for many.

Defiant Californian bars ready for 'Prohibition' raids over smoking ban

FROM TENKU VARADARAJAN
IN NEW YORK

ALL of California except the great outdoors and private homes will effectively become one large no-smoking zone on New Year's Day.

As the new year begins, the latest measure in the state's panoply of anti-tobacco laws comes into force: a ban on smoking in all bars and

THE TIMES TUESDAY DECEMBER 30 1997

چھپ جو ۱۵۰

Chickens gassed in Hong Kong war on flu virus

By JAMES PRINGLE

HONG KONG government workers wielding knives or using poison gas yesterday began the slaughter of 13 million chickens, ducks, geese, caged pigeons, quail and other edible fowl in an attempt to eliminate a virus that can kill.

In this unprecedented killing of every single domestic fowl in the territory, many birds were dispatched with a quick-slicing of the throat.

The drastic elimination of poultry appeared largely backed by Hong Kong's anxious public, who have been crowding hospitals and clinics to have their colds and coughs checked lest they have the H5N1 avian flu virus.

This is an illness that in the past affected only chickens, but there is now a suggestion it can be transmitted between humans. There is no vaccine available to treat avian flu.

Hong Kong authorities are responding to public pressure to act decisively after four deaths, with 13 other residents confirmed as carriers and seven more as suspected carriers, according

to government figures. The incidence of the disease has spread fears of an epidemic. In 1968 a similar flu killed 40,000 people worldwide.

Health inspectors looked on at more than 1,000 stalls selling live poultry in Hong Kong as the killing began — a quick pulling back of each chicken's head and a swift slash at the throat — by workers, many called back from a holiday break. Near the carnage, people placidly ate meals.

On 160 chicken and 39 mixed poultry farms and two wholesale markets in the New Territories, birds were bundled into plastic containers into which carbon dioxide was pumped. At the poultry stalls, the dead or dying birds were pushed into black bin bags by seemingly nonchalant workers, many of them without masks or gloves.

The bags were sterilised with lime before being sent off for dumping in eight landfill sites; some critics say that the carcasses should be burnt to be sure the virus is eliminated. "Everybody is



Agriculture and Fisheries Department officials gather chickens in Hong Kong yesterday before gassing them inside a poultry farm

very busy right now with the operation," said a health official. "We hope to complete it in a day and a half." Most vendors, promised compensation that could exceed £3.15 million, seemed to approve of

the action, having seen a recent drop in sales after confirmation of the disease last August. "It has to be done," said one vendor. "The germs have to be killed off." Once all birds have been

killed, a cleansing and disinfection programme will begin. Imports of fresh chicken will start only when all the cleaning has been carried out, an action likely to take at least a week. About 80 per

cent of Hong Kong's chickens reportedly come from China, where health standards are often low.

Avian flu has struck another blow at Hong Kong's tourism industry, already

reeling from the economic downturn in Asia. However, World Health Organisation officials say the small number of people affected makes it unnecessary to issue any travel advice.

Gangsters squeezing life out of Indian film industry

Bollywood is reeling from violent attacks worthy of its own output,

Christopher Thomas reports

BOLLYWOOD film-making has crashed, a victim of gangsters, censors, satellite television and an unprecedented run of box-office failures. Barely 16 of the 800-odd films produced in Bombay last year made money, threatening the world's biggest movie industry.

Mobsters finance much of Bollywood and interfere with the plots so that thugs are portrayed as avenging angels settling old injustices — a boring formula producing mediocre films of grotesque violence. A bare breast is banned by the board of censors, but it is acceptable to garrote a man and trail his innards across the screen.

Audiences are leaving in droves. So are financiers, both criminal and legitimate, who fear the golden era of Bollywood is over as videos and foreign films invade their territory. The underworld has spread terror through Bollywood, and daylight gun attacks on actors and filmmakers for defying their demands add to the despair.

Big-time actors and producers hide behind intense security: few escape death threats from extortionists. Film-makers no longer boast when a movie is successful, because it invites demands for money from mobsters linked with corrupt police and politicians. The nation's financial capital is effectively run by gangsters unchecked by suborned law enforcement agencies.

Two murders in particular stunned Bollywood this year. Mukesh Duggal, a producer, was killed for defying the underworld, and Gulshan Kumar, king of Hindi film music cassettes, was gunned down after offering prayers at a Bombay temple where he went twice a day.

Mobsters have gained control of powerful trade unions in Bombay and no business is safe from their rackets. Shiv Sena (Army of Shiv), a

thuggish right-wing political organisation that shares power in the city with the hardline Bharatiya Janata Party, has close ties with the underworld — a formidable nexus that answers neither to government nor the law.

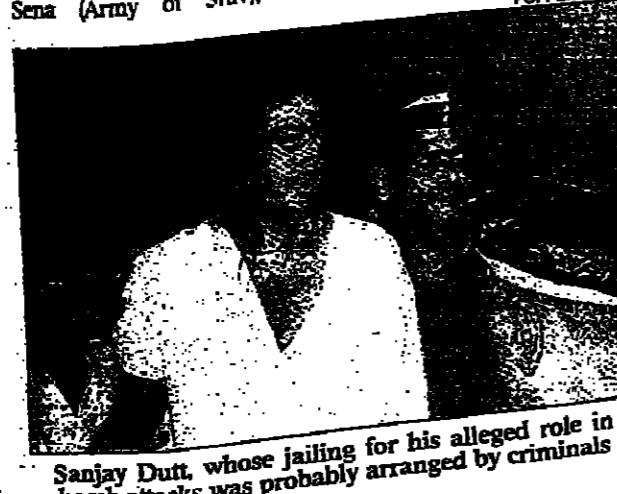
Falling out with Shiv Sena is unwise. Sanjay Dutt, for years one of the biggest heart-throbs of the screen, was jailed in 1995 for alleged involvement in bomb attacks in which several landmark Bombay commercial buildings were wrecked. The allegations, which never stuck, were doubtless trumped up because he had angered Shiv Sena.

Eventually he was freed and required immediately to pay his respects at the home of Bal Thackeray, the Shiv Sena leader, who had been upset that the Dutt family gave shelter to Muslims during anti-Muslim riots. Such scenes scare away foreigners who might otherwise seek to do business in Bombay, which has the country's biggest stock market and busiest port.

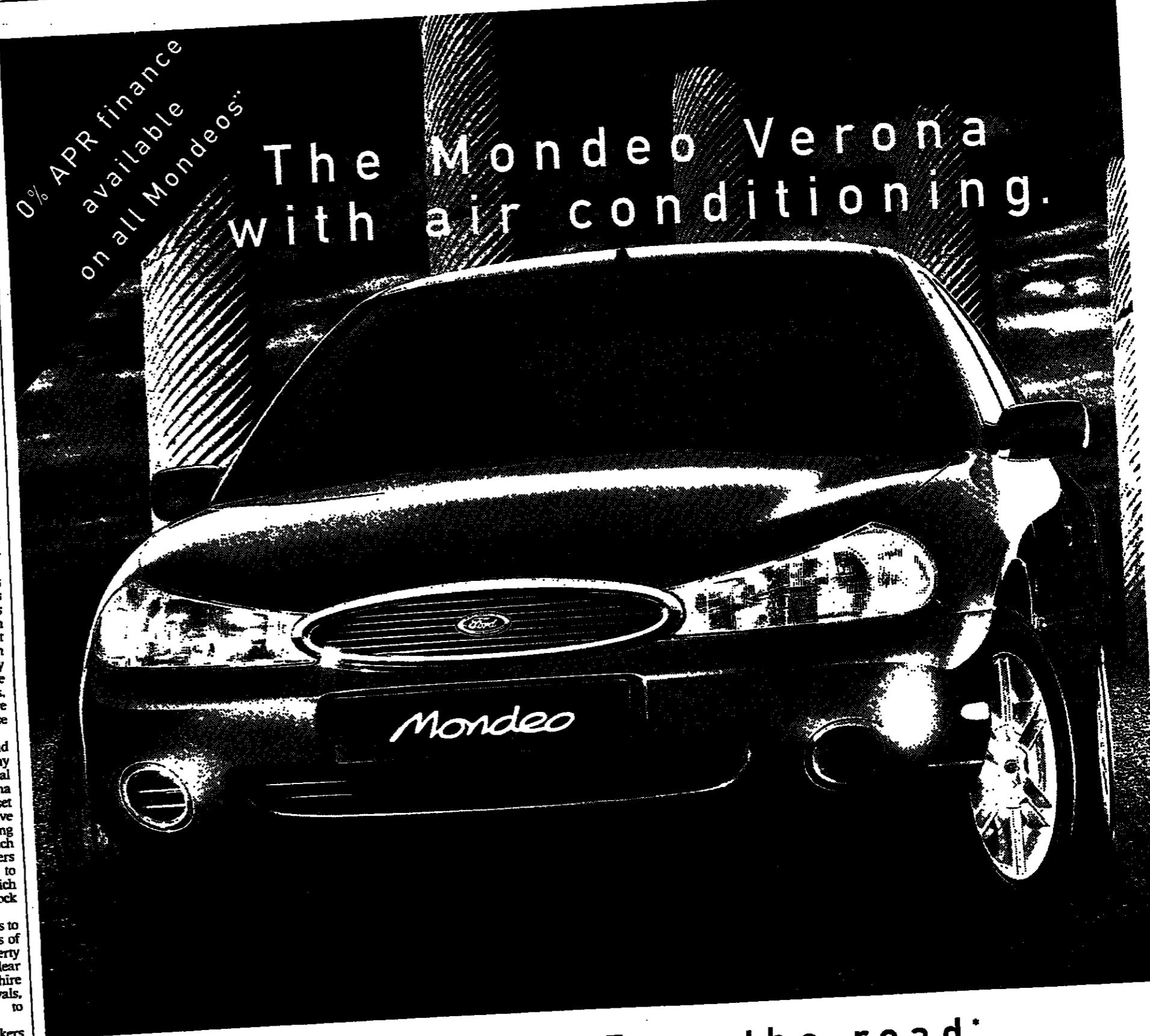
Mobsters hire themselves to landlords who want blocks of flats vacated, and to property developers seeking to clear land of slums. Politicians hire them to kill or threaten rivals, industrialists use them to break strikes.

For decades film-makers have relied on the mobsters for funding. The Government does not formally recognise Bollywood as an industry, so state banks are not allowed to lend money for film-making, forcing producers and directors into the arms of the underworld.

The highest paid Hindi film actors demand £200,000 a film, but few are getting it these days as Bollywood reels. Some top actors are taking a break because it is dangerous to be seen to make money in India's financial capital, a paradox that bodes ill for the future of Hindi films and, indeed, for Bombay.



Sanjay Dutt, whose jailing for his alleged role in bomb attacks was probably arranged by criminals



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Ford

Aboriginal chiefs lay claim to great reef

FROM ROGER MAYNARD

IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA'S bitter debate about Aboriginal territorial rights took a new turn yesterday when indigenous leaders laid claim to thousands of square miles of coastal waters, including the Great Barrier Reef.

In a controversial move that could affect fishing and resorts along much of Australia's coastline, Aboriginal groups announced they had made more than 120 claims for sea rights from northern Queensland to Victoria's Bass Strait.

Professional fishermen said that, if the courts ruled in favour of Aborigines, the claims could ultimately destroy Australia's lucrative inshore fishing industry, worth more than £500 million. Bill Nagle, head of the Australian Seafood Industry Council, described the move as an "unnecessary act of aggression towards fishermen".

The latest Aboriginal claims follow a High Court ruling that Australia's indigenous people enjoy native title and access rights to land leased by farmers, and that the two could legally coexist.

New radar can alert to wayward

Mexico's style party genie link to mass

I accept that I'm different

Moira Petty meets a musical prodigy with Asperger's syndrome who has just made a film

When Joseph Erber celebrated his 13th birthday in December, it was marked with a raucous karaoke party for his schoolfriends. Far from wincing at the shrieks that rent the air, his mother smiled broadly.

"It was such a racket, I was cheered by that," recalls Deborah Roberts, who uses her maiden name. "He used to absent himself from his own birthday parties. When the children arrived he would go to his room."

Joseph's lack of sociability is one symptom of Asperger's syndrome, a mild variant of autism that was diagnosed three years ago. Others symptoms include poor motor skills and hand-to-eye co-ordination, difficulty with sequencing, and obsessive-compulsive behaviour.

Yet Joseph is also a musical prodigy. His composing skills have been recognised by national arbiters of classical music. At 11, he won the Sainsbury Pictures for Schools prize for composition. Last March his work for piano and viola, commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra's lead viola player, Edward Vanderspar, was performed by the LSO at the Barbican.

And if learning to live with both his extraordinary ability and his disability while also dealing with peer pressure were not enough, Joseph has turned the cameras on himself to film his own *Video Diaries* for BBC2.

In a slightly expressionless voice, he sighs: "Because I don't play sport well, it has given me a reputation as a stereotyped boffin, but I don't want to be like that. Other children say the pressure to write classical music is a bit sad, but as long as you enjoy it..."

The film shows Joseph trying to play football, loping aimlessly after the ball and rarely making contact, or helping to water the garden and managing to turn the hose on himself. In the flesh, although possessed of a certain shambling gait, there is little at first to separate him from any other gawky teenage boy.

Seated across a restaurant table, tucking into spaghetti, he gives an unblinking, long-lashed stare as he expounds on his philosophy of life. Then, for short periods, he seems to drift away, railing his cutlery, gazing at the tablecloth and losing his grip on the conversation.

Joseph's interpersonal skills have improved greatly since he began therapy. He used to avoid eye contact, until the reason for it was explained to him. "I'm not mad," he says cheerfully. "I just need someone to talk to who won't take sides."

He is still prone to uncontrollable rages. Two hours earlier his father, James Erber, the avant-garde composer, had despaired of getting Joseph London for our interview. Yet here he was, exhibiting formal good manners and pontificating on the ramifications of his parents' divorce in 1987. This means that every other weekend and for part of the holidays he shuttles between two homes in Sussex and southeast



At three Joseph Erber wrote the notes for a tune he called *My Mummy and Daddy*; by four he knew what his notation sounded like

London. "I'm not 100 per cent happy about that," he says. "Each house has a different way of doing things. But," he adds graciously, "they both employ good methods."

Complications include his father's remarriage to Morgan, a composer of musicals, and his mother's live-in partner, Bruno, an Italian sound engineer. "Sometimes I explain things wrong to Morgan and I get corrected. Then I tell her she's using the wrong tone of voice," says Joseph.

His relationship with Bruno, who cares for Joseph when his mother is away singing, can be explosive. On tape, against a background of flashing rain, Bruno pines for Rome. "What am I doing here, looking after this child who is always telling me what I should do because he knows better?" he says mournfully, adding: "Still, I do care for him."

Joseph, for his part, vows to be nice to Bruno. "I don't know how he can still find hope."

Joseph recorded 11 hours of tape for his video diary, condensed by the programme's editors into 50 minutes. Having seen a preview, Joseph has some criticisms. He is scathing of two scenes in which his mother man-

handles him up the stairs to bed and he boomerangs down again: "They're just trying to be funny and clever." His mother says these scenes are slapstick versions of her struggle to get Joseph to conform to normal behaviour. "He would not expose himself in his blackest moods for the cameras," she reveals. "He has flare-ups, like steam building up. He hasn't learnt to express disagreement and disappointment without rage. At one stage, it was very worrying."

Sometimes he wakes up in what I call an autistic mood. Time vanishes into a black hole while he reads cereal packets or is otherwise distracted. But within his terms he's considerate, and so loving. "We can't have ordinary beach holidays with him. We were at a beach one day and Joseph spent the whole morning getting sand on his feet and then rushing to the tap to wash it off. He also has certain bedtime rituals that he wouldn't allow to be filmed. The pillows have to be dead centre, the bed has to be knocked against the wall three times, his slippers have to go under it.

"We use humour most of the time to get through this. He says 'I've got to do my rituals now,' and I laugh and say: 'Well, I'm going downstairs then.' Joseph, too, sees comedy as a useful tool. "I've discovered a new, funny side of me. It's helped me to accept that I am different from other boys. It's hard not to go on and on about things. I've got a BBC2 kind of humour. I laugh and laugh about certain words and the other kids don't understand."

Joseph says his early years were "spent in a dream". His father recalls problems Joseph had following a film or pantomime. "He would ask the most basic questions. 'Who's that? What are they doing?' He couldn't understand emotional relationships. This Christmas he watched *Oliver!* on television and followed it for the first time."

Mr Erber believes that the non-representational aspect of music is a strong attraction for Joseph. At three, he wrote the notes for a tune he called *My Mummy and Daddy*; by four he knew what his notation sounded like. He took up the violin at five and the piano at seven. "I went through a phase of wanting to give up the violin

but my mother said it would be useful if I wanted to be a good composer."

Joseph, who watches *EastEnders*, plays computer games, and is fascinated by high-profile court cases, has recently begun listening to pop music. "It would be easy for me to write pop songs and get them in the charts. I could pay off the mortgage."

Video Diaries follows Joseph's progress in a recent music composition competition. His father declares that he would be "over the moon" if any of his much older students produced work of Joseph's calibre. His mother is seen exclaiming "God almighty!" at what seems to be his lack of progress.

"If he has a deadline, he must be responsible," she explains. "I am not ambitious for him. I'm only concerned that he develops his full potential as a person. I'm prouder of the progress he's made in controlling his temper than his talent."

"I don't worry about his future. I was sickened by one expert who said he was unlikely to marry. He'll make a wonderful husband for the right girl who understands him."

• *Video Diaries* will be shown on January 3 at 10.55pm on BBC2.

Don't go on holiday without the right jabs

The Christmas tree lights are still burning but even now the summer holiday brochures are beginning to arrive. Only a third will offer any advice on health, and even when they do it is usually only in general terms.

Forty-one million overseas trips were taken by British travellers in 1995, about 25 per cent to some faraway place designated as an "at risk destination" by doctors. These are the areas where the visitor — whether holidaymaker, business traveller, backpacking student or a returning expatriate — is at risk of acquiring a clinically significant infection.

Travellers are confused about the degree of risk: four out of ten are unaware of any threat to their health that might be posed by their destination, and one in ten, although fully aware of the risks, refuses to have appropriate vaccinations or to take prophylactic measures, such as anti-malarial treatment, even if it has been offered.

The vaccines needed to prevent infection will be in the doctor's refrigerator rather than in the patient's own medicine chest, but are no less important for that reason in preserving the household's health during the year.

The latest dispute to hit the NHS is over who should pay for such vaccinations. Previous governments of both political parties have always decreed that public health considerations demanded that the NHS should foot the bill for protection against any disease which, although frequently caught overseas, might later pose a health threat to the overall community once the traveller had returned. Hence the NHS paid for immunisation against diseases such as hepatitis A and B, typhoid, polio, tetanus and diphtheria, but conversely the travellers had to pay for injections against such conditions as rabies and yellow fever, where the risk was posed only to the bitten person.

Petting a stray dog in Bangkok, for instance, is a risky business because at least 4 per cent of them have rabies, and each year a potentially rabid dog bites 100,000 people in the city, but the risk is entirely to the individual.

The dangers of relaxing efforts to inoculate travellers is a real one. Hepatitis A, which is easily prevented by simple injections, is caught by one in 300 unprotected visitors at luxury tourist hotels during annual holidays spent in risk areas. In the middle-aged and older it has an appreciable mortality of about 2 per cent. The risk is much greater in students and other hardy travellers who prefer to camp or backpack; one in 50

will return to this country either carrying or having had hepatitis. The hazard is not over once they return to Britain — one in four who share their household will catch hepatitis A and, overall, one in six outbreaks of hepatitis A stems from infection brought from abroad.

The medical organisations most involved with the travelling public, the treatment of their diseases and the care in the communities with whom they live in Britain, such as the Overseas Doctors Association, the Primary Care Virology Group of Doctors, The Royal College of Nursing, the National Union of Students and the Patients Association, are all determined in their opposition to another proposed erosion in the standards of public healthcare. The BMA has still to make up its mind, torn between a desire to prevent any further erosion of the NHS and the need to save money. This saving may well be a false

economy as the treatment of infections caught overseas, now running at about £12 million a year, is not the only call on the Exchequer. The average case of hepatitis A involves 40 days off work. And many of the diseases caught overseas may involve benefit payment to the sufferers and their families for months or even years.

When booking next year's holiday, the householder should think about the health implications of the destination chosen and should consult his local GP or travel clinic about what is needed for his family's protection. Unfortunately, 14 per cent of GPs do not have the latest information, and 10 per cent of travel agents are unaware of health risks.

It is also grossly negligent, for instance, for people to take their children to areas where meningitis is common — such as The Gambia and Kenya, without obtaining protection against the local strains which can, fortunately, be prevented by inoculation. Everyone who travels, even to southern Europe and the Mediterranean, should be protected against hepatitis A, and preferably B, as well as typhoid.

All those who hope to have a holiday overseas should also be up-to-date with their immunisation against diphtheria, polio and tetanus.



What makes you the way you are?

WHAT determines human behaviour? This controversial question will be debated by two world-leading scientists, Steven Pinker and Steven Rose, at a forum on Wednesday, January 21.

Professor Pinker argues that what people do is largely determined by their genes. But Professor Rose believes that human beings are able to shape their own lives and that to assume otherwise is socially and politically dangerous.

Chaired by Dr Susan Blackmore, the forum at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, at 8pm, marks the publication of Pinker's *How the Mind Works* (Allen Lane, £20) and Rose's *Lifelines* (Allen Lane, £20). The admission price of £10 (concessions £7.50) includes £2 off the price of either book.

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Please note that cheques will be paid out on Jan 14. Tickets booked after this date will be held for collection on the night of the venue. Please call 071-467 1672 to confirm your booking.

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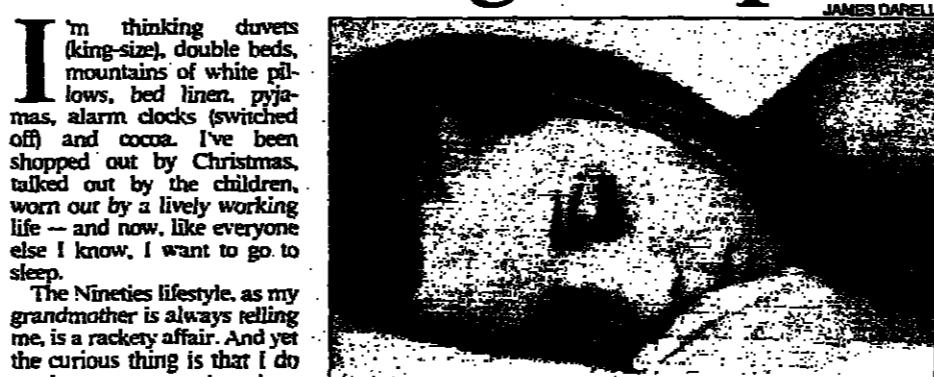
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Ann of 1997



What I need is more rest, says Rachel Morris

The big sleep



Sleep will soon be the kindest present you can give to friends

made my head begin to nod, and no sooner did I crawl under it than I was off to sleep as quick as a baby at the bottle (so the saying goes — mine never did). Even the children fell prey to the duvet's wondrous powers and could be found, at last, wending their way towards the double bed, eyes shut, thumbs in mouths, comforters trailing behind them. We loved that duvet. After each other and the children it was the next thing we would have rescued if the house burnt down.

These days there is only one thing that anyone who has everything is unlikely to have, and that is sufficient sleep. The way things are going, sleep will soon be the kindest present you can give to your friends. We used to know a couple of diplomats who, being well ahead of their time, would organise sleeping Sunday lunches. If you turned up at their house on a Sunday afternoon, you would find a room full of men nodding off in front of the television, while in the next room women were doing the same in front of the

television. Not long ago my husband and I bought a new duvet. It was hugely expensive and wonderfully comfortable. Even looking at that duvet

and, it goes without saying, sleep is all that anyone has in mind.

Ann of 1997

Anniversaries of 1998

Next year marks a half-century of the NHS and Prince Charles's 50th birthday. Jack Lonsdale highlights the year's important celebrations

JANUARY

4 Independence of the Union of Burma, 1948.
 9 Caroline Herschel (1750-1848), astronomer, died Hanover.
 Dame Gracie Fields (1898-1979), actress and singer, born Rochdale.
 13 Publication of Zola's *J'accuse* condemning the Dreyfus prosecution, 1898.
 14 Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) (1832-98), novelist and mathematician, died Guildford.
 16 Charles Pelham Villiers (1802-98), statesman, died London.
 18 Henry George Liddell (1811-98), Greek lexicographer, died Ascot.
 Matthew ("Captain") Webb (1848-83), the first Channel swimmer (1875), born Dawley, Shropshire.
 19 Isaac Israels (1766-1848), author, died Bradenham, Buckinghamshire.
 August Comte (1798-1857), French philosopher, born Montpellier.
 23 Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948), Russian film director, born Riga.
 26 Christian Neefe (1748-1798), German conductor and composer, died Dusseldorf.
 28 Vittorio Rieti (1898-1994), Italian composer, born Alexandria, Egypt.
 30 Mahandas Karamchand



The Depths of the Sea by Sir Edward Burne-Jones (died London, June 1898)

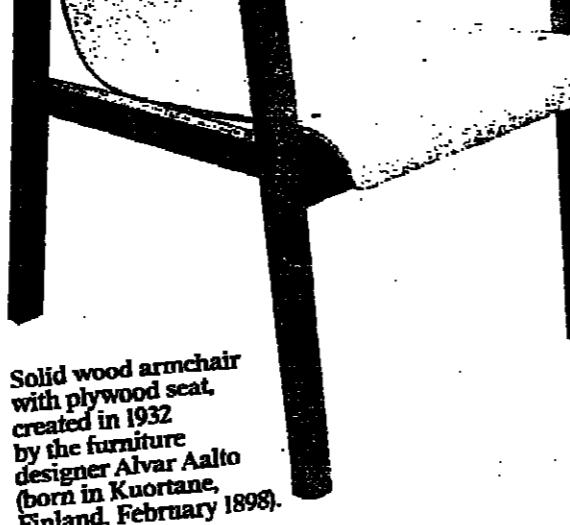
Gandhi (1869-1948), Indian leader, assassinated Delhi.
 Orville Wright (1871-1948), American aviation pioneer, died Dayton, Ohio.
 31 Karl Reissiger (1798-1859), German conductor and composer, born Bézig.

FEBRUARY

1 Elikana Settim (1623-1724), poet, born Dunstable.
 Aivar Aalto (1898-1976), Finnish architect, born Kuortane.
 4 Edward George Villiers Stanley, 17th Earl of Derby (1865-1948), politician, died Knowsley, Lancashire.
 10 Bertrand Brecht (1898-1956), German poet and playwright, born Augsburg.
 11 Thomas Cole (1801-48), American painter, died Catskill, New York.
 15 Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), philosopher and jurist, born London.
 24 Grant Allen (1848-99), novelist and man of science, born Alvington, Canada.
 26 Thomas Cooke (1782-1848), singer and composer, died London.
 The Second Republic proclaimed in France, 1848.
 27 Sir Charles Parry, Bt. (1848-1918), composer, born Bournmouth.
 29 Robert Barrington-Ward (1891-1948), Editor of *The Times*, 1941-48, died at sea.

MARCH

1 Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907), American sculptor, born Cornish, New Hampshire.
 5 William Shield (1748-1829), violinist and composer, born Whitchurch, Durham.
 Felice Cavallotti (1842-98), Italian poet and politician, killed in a duel, Rome.
 10 John Playfair (1748-1819), geologist, born near Dundee.
 Jan Masaryk (1886-1948), Czech statesman, died Prague.
 11 Dorothy Gish (1898-1988), American actress, born Massillon, Ohio.
 15 Sir Henry Bessemer (1813-98), engineer and inventor, died London.



Solid wood armchair with plywood seat, created in 1932 by the furniture designer Aivar Aalto (born in Kuortane, Finland, February 1898).

Dame Margaret (Madge) Kendal (1848-1935), actress, born Grimsby.
 16 Aubrey Vincent Beardsley (1872-98), artist, died Menton, France.
 18 Louise Caroline Alberta (1848-1939), princess, sixth child and fourth daughter of Queen Victoria, born London.
 21 Theodor de Bry (1528-98), German engraver, died Frankfurt am Main.
 John Burke (1787-1849), genealogist, died Aix-la-Chapelle.

APRIL

4 Grinling Gibbons (1648-1720), wood carver, born Rotterdam.
 7 Randall Thomas Davidson, Baron Davidson of Lambeth (1848-1930), Archbishop of Canterbury, 1903-28, born Edinburgh.
 The World Health Organisation founded, Geneva, 1948.
 8 Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848), Italian composer, died Bergamo, Lombardy.
 9 Paul Robeson (1898-1976), American singer and actor, born Princeton, New Jersey.
 12 William Kent (1684-1748), architect and landscape gardener, died London.
 13 Joseph Braithwaite (1748-1814), engineer, born Stainborough, Yorks.
 18 Gustave Moreau (1826-98), French painter, died Paris.
 20 Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), French painter, born Charenton-Saint-Maurice.
 John Grierson (1898-1972), documentary film pioneer, born Kilmadock, Fife, Scotland.

MAY

3 Golda Meir (1898-1978), Prime Minister of Israel 1969-74, born Kiev.
 10 George Vancouver (1758-98), explorer, died Petersham.
 11 Tom Cribb (1781-1849), champion pugilist, died London.
 14 The State of Israel was proclaimed, 1948.

JUNE

1 Henry Kemble (1748-1907), actor, born London.
 3 Samuel Pimlott (1824-98), "The Sailors' Friend", died Folkestone.
 4 Giovanni Casanova (1725-98), writer and diplomat, died Duchov, Czech Republic.
 Lord Edward Fitzgerald (1763-98), Irish rebel, died Dublin.
 5 Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936), Spanish poet and dramatist, born Fuente Vaqueros.
 6 Dame Ninette de Valois, choreographer, founder of the Royal Ballet, born Balby, Bessington, Co. Wicklow, 1898.
 10 Alexis Lvov (1798-1870), Russian violinist and composer, born Revel.
 Louis Lumière (1864-1948), French pioneer of motion pictures, died Bandol.
 11 Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), French painter, born Paris.
 15 Sir Edward Burne-Jones, sculptor, born Castleford.



The Soviet film director Sergei Eisenstein, creator of such classics as *Battleship Potemkin*, was born in 1898

Bt. (1833-98), painter, died London.
 1898-1900, French painter, died Paris.
 20 Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), French painter, born Osnabrück.

AUGUST

1 Nelson defeated the French fleet at the battle of the Nile, 1798.
 3 Charles Garnier (1825-98), French architect, died Paris.
 1869-1948), historian, died Mithford-on-Sea.
 4 William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520-98), statesman, died London.
 8 Eugene Boudin (1824-98), French painter, died Deauville.
 9 Frederick Marryat (1792-1848), novelist, died Norfolk.
 12 George Stephenson (1781-1848), pioneer of railways, died near Chesterfield.
 13 Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848-1909), Indian politician and author, born Calcutta.
 Jean Boroza (1898-1994), French tennis player, born Arbonne.
 14 The Olympic Games opened in London, 1948.
 21 Jules Michelin (1778-1874), French historian, born Paris.
 22 Edwin Mullins (1848-1907), sculptor, born London.
 A French force invaded Ireland, 1798.
 27 James Thomson (1700-48), poet, died Richmond, Surrey.
 29 Albert Bartholomé (1848-1928), French sculptor, born Thiverval.

JULY

1 Britain acquired a 99-year lease on Hong Kong, 1898.
 3 Joshua Slocum (1844-c.1910) completed the first solo sailing round the world, 1895.
 4 Vicomte François René Chateaubriand (1768-1848), French author and diplomat, died Paris.
 Gertrude Lawrence (1898-1952), actress, born London.
 5 The National Health Service came into operation, 1948.
 6 Gene Tunney (1898-1978), American boxer, born New York.
 26 Vincent Voiture (1597-1648), French poet, died Paris.
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 26 Vincent Voiture (1597-1648), French poet, died Paris.

SEPTEMBER

2 Defeat of the Dervishes by Kitchener at Omdurman, 1898.
 3 Eduard Beneš (1848-1948), Czech statesman, died Sezimovo Usti.
 7 Catherine Parr (1512-48), sixth and last Queen of Henry VIII, died Sudeley Castle, Herefordshire.
 9 Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), French poet, died Valvins.
 11 Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), first Governor-General of Pakistan, died Karachi.
 15 William Seward Burroughs (1855-98), American novelist, died Citronelle, Alabama.
 16 Arthur James Balfour, first Earl of Balfour (1848-1930), Prime Minister 1902-05, born Whittingehame, East Lothian.
 27 Vladimir de Pachmann (1843-1933), Russian pianist, born Odessa.
 30 Otto von Bismarck, Prince (1815-98), first German Chancellor, died Friedrichsruh.

OCTOBER

10 Henry Moore (1898-1988), sculptor, born Castleford.
 12 Ruth Benedict (1887-1948), American anthropologist, died New York.
 Folke Bernadotte, Count (1895-1948), UN diplomat, murdered Jerusalem.
 20 Theodor Fontane (1819-98), German writer, died Berlin.
 26 George Gershwin (1898-1937), American composer, born New York.

ET ARCHIVE

4 Sir Arthur Whitten Brown (1886-1948), aviator, with Alcock, the first to fly the Atlantic non-stop (1919), died Swindon.
 5 Thomas Power O'Connor (1848-1929), journalist and politician, born Athlone.
 21 Julian Russell Sturgis (1848-1904), novelist, born Boston, Massachusetts.
 24 Massimo Azeglio (1798-1866), Italian painter and statesman, born Turin.
 Franz Lehár (1870-1948), Hungarian composer, died Bad Ischl, Austria.

NOVEMBER

2 Alfred George Edwards (1848-1937), first Archbishop of

Wales (1920-34), born Llanymawddwy, Merionethshire.
 12 Umberto Giordano (1867-1949), Italian composer, died Milan.
 14 The Prince of Wales, born Buckingham Palace, 1948.
 19 Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-98), United Irishman, committed suicide, Dublin.
 21 René Magritte (1898-1967), Belgian painter, born Lessines.

23 Étienne Joseph Floquet (1748-1815), French composer, born Aix-en-Provence.
 25 Isaac Watts (1674-1748), hymn writer, died Stoke Newington, London.
 28 Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825-98), Swiss poet, died Kilchberg.

DECEMBER

4 Luigi Galvani (1737-98), Italian physician, died Bologna.
 7 Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), Italian sculptor, born Naples.

9 Joel Chandler Harris (1848-1908), American humorist, short-story writer, born Eatonton, Georgia.

19 Emily Brontë (1818-49), novelist and poet, died Haworth.

23 Robert Barclay (1648-90), Quaker, born Gordonston.

25 Georges Rodenbach (1855-98), Belgian poet, died Paris.

28 Thomas Henderson (1798-1844), astronomer, born Dundee.

29 Claude Conder (1848-1910), Palestine explorer and scholar, born Cheltenham.

31 Sir Malcolm Campbell (1885-1948), racing motorist, died Reigate.

Actress Dorothy Gish, born March 1898, in *Turning the Tables*

1998

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The last of Africa's big men

Trevor Royle on three dictators
trapped in a time warp

Kenya's Daniel arap Moi is one of the last of Africa's big men. Like his near neighbours Robert Mugabe and Kenneth Kaunda, he is a relic of the post-colonial period, holding on to power whatever the consequences for his country and its people by sidelining or imprisoning opponents and surrounding himself with ultra-loyal security forces.

All three are locked in a time warp at the centre of political power in respectively, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia. All are in their seventies and all seem to be living in an age that is slowly disappearing from memory — the bad old days when African rulers depended on tribal loyalties, violence, and political skulduggery to remain in office.

President Moi became virtual dictator of Kenya in 1978 when he created a one-party state, eliminated his opponents and printed huge numbers of banknotes to pay for his increasingly expensive tastes. The results were a disaster for Kenya, which at independence in 1963 was one of Africa's most settled and well-run countries. Today the average annual wage is \$280, unemployment is endemic and the most optimistic forecast for this year's growth in gross domestic product is a meagre 2 per cent.

Despite the economic problems and the country's increasingly fragile infrastructure, Moi will be voted back into office simply because he has been in power for so long that his associates know how to manipulate the electorate. As happened in earlier elections, voters have been harassed, vote-rigging is commonplace and in many rural areas votes have been sold for cash.

By contrast, Zimbabwe seems to be a haven of contentment but it, too, is struggling under a post-colonial legacy. Last month Mugabe decided to push ahead with plans forcibly to purchase 1,503 farms and to redistribute them to guerrilla fighters who had supported him during the years of confrontation with white Rhodesian rule. It was a promise which he has taken a long time to make good. He came to power in 1980 and in that time Zimbabwe, like Kenya, has become a one-party state with a cowed Opposition. For example, there has never been a satisfactory investigation into the notorious Matabeleland massacres of 1982 which claimed the lives of thousands of Mugabe's opponents.

The controversial land reform programme is a timely measure for Mugabe because it will deflect growing internal criticism of the declining economy and an absence of civil rights. It certainly does not make financial sense. Economists have forecast that it could bankrupt the country's treasury, but for Mugabe that is beside the point. Zimbabwe is hovering on the brink of unprecedented political unrest after a series of communal demonstrations and for the first time workers protesting

against tax increases and wage cuts have been joined by veterans of the civil war.

Like Moi, Mugabe depends on a fragmented Opposition and well-organised security forces and these have served him well. But even out of power African big men are still powers in the land. At present Kaunda is in confinement on treason charges but such has been the strength of the international outcry at his arrest that the name of the former Zambian President still counts for something.

What makes this triumvirate's survival so arresting is that it goes against the tide which has been sweeping through Africa since the end of the Cold War. Rulers can no longer rely on support from the rival superpowers and thereby enrich themselves. To attract foreign investors, governments have had to tackle corruption and call a halt to unnecessarily grandiose public works. In other words, the free-market economy has been embraced and old dictatorial methods of government are being consigned to time's wastepaper basket.

And it is working. In war-torn Uganda, for many years one of Africa's heart-sink cases, President Yoweri Museveni has succeeded in restoring order by demystifying the power of the gun and by patching up local ethnic differences. Earlier this year, Zaire rid itself of 27 years of misrule by President Mobutu when an armed revolt supported by moderate neighbours put paid to his personal greed and his refusal to institute reforms. There is even hope in Ethiopia and Mali, once in decline, where a new generation of rulers realises that social progress is assisted by economic reform and that the days of open-ended aid programmes have gone for ever.

It is against that backdrop that Moi and his fellow *wabensi* (owners of Mercedes cars) are operating in Kenya. Using the tools which have served them so well in the past to hold on to power, they continue to mock international demands for reform. Time, though, is not on their side. Not only are the international institutions reeling to honour loans unless corruption and bribery are ended, but history is against them.

Some of the worst concomitants to the end of colonial rule in Africa — the breakdown in civil authority, the internecine wars, the executions of political opponents, the widespread venality and the squandering of natural resources — are increasingly a thing of the past.

Like most countries in Africa, Kenya no longer needs a big man like Moi: it needs someone capable of clearing up all the damage he has inflicted on this once prosperous country.

Trevor Royle is the author of Winds of Change: The End of Empire in Africa, published by John Murray.



Making a hash of dope

Tabloid hysteria over a Cabinet minister's son demonstrates the need for an adult look at cannabis and the law

You have to admit it: the headline "Cabinet minister's son sells drugs" was brilliantly timed on Christmas Eve. *The Mirror* could not have caught us in a more vulnerable state. There we all were, milling around in unaccustomed family togetherness. Memories of past sweet baby Christmases made mothers maudlin and treifful; clumping feet and loud music made fathers grumpy. Teenagers were slamming out of houses to meet friends with names like Zag and Chaz and refusing to promise back by midnight. Older relatives were arriving, houses growing smaller and hotter, three or four generations of prejudice clinking dangerously together.

We were ripe to enjoy the embarrassment of one of Mr Blair's prim New Model Army. "Hah!" we said, in national chorus. "I hope they make him go to government parenting classes!" Some took dark pleasure in showing offspring the page on which the minister marches his erring child into the police station and says: "My son has something to tell you." At 17, you could die of embarrassment just reading about it.

Of course it was a very dirty trick. The boy only sold a teenager's worth of to a shameless agent provocatrice. We learn that Ms Dawn Alford and a friend posed as "trainee estate agents", so we can assume they looked young, while exuding a certain cheap sophistication. She says that they engaged the hapless kid in conversation "within a few minutes" and took several rounds of lager off his friends "as we discussed festivals and rock concerts ... raving, the legal drug poppers and rumours of cocaine-taking by celebrities. Later the chat turned to cannabis." It is not revealed whether Ms Alford wriggled, pouted, flicked her hair and flirred with the ministerial offspring in front of his mates, but we can make an educated guess.

When you are 17, slightly older women with luminous lipstick exert a powerful spell.

What is rather poignantly, revealed is that "not once during the conversation did he mention his famous parent or hint that he was talking about a member of the Government". Poor kid: he thought he was off-duty, valued himself, normal and cool and daring. When Delilah pretended to want some cannabis resin he nipped out and fetched it to prove his sophistication.

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BENEFITS IN KIND

Tories have sound reasons to support welfare reform

Absence, it would appear, can make the mind grow sharper. Chris Patten's comments yesterday that the Conservatives should endorse rather than exploit Tony Blair's stand on welfare reform deserve serious consideration. The Tories will soon determine their response to the issue that is likely to dominate Parliament and politics in 1998. Mr Patten's intervention is interesting as, for much of his career, he has been an admirer of the post-1945 social settlement. That a figure associated with the paternalist section of his party has accepted the need for radical welfare reform is in itself significant.

There are three compelling reasons why the Conservatives should support Mr Blair's efforts to reconstruct the welfare state principle, politics, and plausibility. Of these, the first is the most important. It has long been an article of faith among Tories that the British welfare state has been constructed on dubious assumptions, is excessively expensive, and is extraordinarily ineffective in its stated task of eradicating poverty. On this basis, Peter Lilley, as Social Security Secretary, undertook a review of benefits in the last Parliament. Although incremental and not fundamental, his efforts were the single most impressive set of actions by a minister in the Major administration. The Tories should therefore welcome the Prime Minister's willingness to build on them.

It would also be shrewd politics. The Conservatives will win little fresh support from an opportunistic resistance to the Government. The Child Poverty Action Group is not waiting for its moment to anoint William Hague. If, instead, the Tories back the Prime Minister and urge him to think not only the unthinkable but the unthought, they will only increase the widespread unease felt on the Labour left. Conservative Party enthusiasm makes Campaign Group rebellion inevitable. This would leave the impression, if inaccurate,

that Mr Blair actually needed Tory help to enact a central part of his agenda.

There is also the simple point of plausibility. The Conservatives will lack credibility if they oppose welfare reform. Mr Hague in a baseball cap or sipping cocktails at the Notting Hill Carnival is one thing; chaining himself to a wheelchair is another. The Conservatives have tried this already through their ill-considered opposition to the introduction of tuition fees for higher education. The sight of Stephen Dorrell seeking succour from the National Union of Students was utterly embarrassing. The Tories rendered themselves ridiculous. As a consequence, their broader views on the Dearing report are virtually irrelevant.

Mr Hague's approach on welfare reform must be entirely different. He should announce that he will adopt a bipartisan approach. That said, he can offer two constructive critiques. The first is that the exercise should not be annexed by the Treasury. Ethics as well as expenditure matter. The predominant reasons why people should be encouraged, and then obliged, to move from welfare to work is because it is in their own social and economic interest. Work would be the better option if the social security budget were £100 million rather than £100 billion.

His second argument should be that welfare reform is but part of a wider effort to redefine the relationship between the individual and the State. The most enlightened Republicans in the United States have embraced the notion of "empowerment" – an activist conservatism that seeks to enable the poor to take control of their own lives. The Prime Minister may sympathise with this but the overwhelming majority of his party does not. Mr Hague should seek to outflank new Labour not through opposition but agreement. It is also the position that would benefit his party and the country.

PHOENIX BERLIN

The irresistible rise of Germany's reborn capital city

The Berlin Airlift, which began fifty years ago next June, was the West's response to Stalin's attempt to starve West Berlin into submission. Had he succeeded, he would have consolidated the Soviet satellite in East Germany, and perhaps prevented the emergence of a West German state which was to become the linchpin of Nato. The travails of Berlin then and the city's triumph now provide a powerful metaphor for the dramatic recovery of Germany and the last eclipse of communism's dark shadow.

Three years of tension came to a crunch in June 1948, when the Allies, under pressure to end the postwar hyperinflation, allowed the currency reform devised by Ludwig Erhard and blessed by Konrad Adenauer, to go ahead. This was a political as well as an economic gamble: overnight, fortunes were wiped out in favour of a virtual *tabula rasa*. For the first time since the war, Germans in the Western sectors could trade not just in US dollars or packets of American cigarettes, but in a new and surprisingly hard currency: the Deutsche Mark. To the Russians, this was the ultimate provocation. It ensured that the division of Germany would endure; and its success would be a decisive victory for capitalism.

Stalin decided to retaliate against the isolated Western sectors of Berlin. The German siege of Leningrad had cost many hundreds of thousands of Russian lives, and it was assumed by the Kremlin that the Allies would not tolerate that level of civilian casualties, and would cave in. The blockade began on June 24, 1948, and lasted until September 30, 1949. In order to break the siege, 277,264 supply flights were flown – an unprecedented effort which cost the lives of



loved, by all Germans as their capital – and it never will be.

And yet Berlin is again becoming capital of a united Germany. In the aftermath of reunification the Bundestag voted to move itself a thousand miles eastwards, back to the old *Reichshauptstadt*, in 1999. Following the precedent of the Weimar Republic, many Germans have begun to call the postwar period the "Bonn Republic". One day we may speak of the new Germany as the "Berlin Republic". The past 50 years, from physical resurrection to political rehabilitation, have been about surviving external threats. The next half-century is more likely to be about overcoming internal paralysis.

A NATIONAL TREASURE

One man's battle to rescue the glories of the country house

Polesden Lacey, Dyrham Park, The Vyne, Ham House, the rounded old names call the roll of a heritage, a fabric of the past that we cannot now imagine as other than securely held in trust. To walk through their rich interiors, their gardens and parklands and even their kitchen quarters is to open a channel in the mind through which aesthetic delight mixes with curiosity about the past and admiration for the panache of their proud creators. In the words of James Lees-Milne, they are "the people's palaces of our time" much as the cathedral was for those of the Middle Ages. They seem indescribably ours. Yet their survival is owed, in literally hundreds of cases, to the passion, expertise and not least the social skills of this one man.

In 1936, when the young Lees-Milne landed his ill-paid and rather humble job with the National Trust, it was primarily concerned with preserving landscape. As secretary to the trust's new country houses committee, he rode his bicycle or drove the trust's unreliable car up long drives, knocked on great portals and, to families whose pride it was to have lived there for centuries, put the case for making over their magnificent houses to the nation.

His work was to span more than half a century and to include not just the grandest structures but those he affectionately

described as the "illustrious obscure" gems of domestic architecture. The assessment of mullions and panes, pierced balustrades, mouldings and wainscoting, was the easier part. Lord Esher sent him on his travels with the words: "You will find 90 per cent of country house owners sympathetic 10 per cent odious and 100 per cent eccentric." As Lees-Milne was to record in his indiscreet, irresistibly vivid diaries of these encounters, he was to learn the arts of a chameleon, to be "a mirror of other people's moods, opinions and prejudices". His diary is itself a precious portrait of an almost vanished society.

The houses he entered were often not as they are today; their owners were beset with dry rot, debt, death duties and, in wartime, the graffiti carved by troops billeted in the west wing. Paintings might be dirtied, plumbing dicey, walls running with damp. It was not just fact but a real empathy with their struggles that enabled him to win their trust. In the same spirit, he opposed the "museumisation" of these houses, seeking "to preserve their character unimpaired". Lees-Milne did more; he preserved an essential part of the character of this land. This was a very English kind of miracle, of improvisation allied to knowledge and persistence; no legacy is finer than that of this most civilised of Englishmen.

Belief in the NHS — with a proviso

From Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

Sir, Professors Alberti and Lessof of the Royal College of Physicians (letter, December 26) paint too bleak a picture of the difficulties the NHS faces in meeting increased patient expectations.

Of course, the NHS has a real challenge on its hands as every new medical invention comes on stream. But its record in almost 50 years has been one of outstanding success in accommodating the impact of advancing medical technology.

It is certainly true that some new treatments involve expensive care of patients whose conditions were previously untreatable. But other medical advances have allowed us simultaneously to improve the quality and contain resource pressures. New drugs can be expensive, but have the potential to reduce the need for hospital admission.

The fact is that over the years the NHS has used technology to upgrade its treatment, raise throughputs, lower unit costs and still hardly increase its spending as a proportion of national output.

There is every reason to suppose that the NHS can continue to provide a broadly comprehensive health service, provided that the wide range of variation in managerial and clinical performance between different parts of the NHS can be ironed out. The Government's recent White Paper (report, December 10; letters, December 16) offers some exciting new ideas for achieving this.

The crucial leadership role of the medical Royal Colleges in bringing the worse performers up to the level of the best would be of enormous help.

Yours sincerely,
PHILIP A. HUNT
(Director, National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts, 1990-97)
House of Lords, December 27.

Welsh assembly

From Mr Julian J. Wragg

Sir, In answer to Mr Ray Kingdon (letter, December 23), who voted "yes" to a Welsh assembly upon the understanding that it would be based in Cardiff, I voted "no" to a Welsh assembly knowing full well, along with the huge number of Welsh people who voted as I did, or, significantly, who couldn't be bothered to vote at all, that such an expensive farce will ultimately prove about as much use or relevance as if it were based on the Moon.

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN J. WRAGG,
17 Hendy-Llwyni,
Gard, Maeseg CF34 0DJ,
December 23.

From Dr Christina Laine

Sir, Is it not interesting that Mr Ray Kingdon voted "yes" to a Welsh assembly for exactly the same reason that many of us in North Wales voted "no"?

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTINE LAINE,
Springfield,
Marford, Wrexham LL12 8TF,
December 23.

Footing Scottish bill

From Mr John Turford

Sir, I trust that under the Scotland Bill the Scots are to pay for the entire cost of their new parliament building.

Sixty-five million pounds for St Andrew's House, or even £50 million for a new-build site (News in brief, December 24) seems an awful lot of money for a glorified parish council. I hope they think it's worth it.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN TURFORD,
6 Radbrook Road,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 9BA,
December 24.

Gaelic links

From Mr Geoffrey H. Lloyd

Sir, You report (News in brief, December 17) that the Government has launched a project to promote Gaelic and its traditions to Scotland and Ireland costing £6 million.

Where does the demand for this come from? And how can satisfying an obvious minority group be defended in the face of universal belt-tightening both in national and local government? The Government constantly reminds us that its policies are all about priorities. I would be unimpressed if the Scots were to spend any of their existing (generous) subsidies from Westminster on this initiative, to offer new money leaves me incredulous and baffled.

Such an outlay might be better invested in making good the appalling shortcomings in the present use of English throughout the UK.

Lottery money, perhaps: taxpayers' money, never.

Yours sincerely,
GEOFFREY H. LLOYD,
Longacre,
73 High Street,
Little Wilbraham,
Cambridge CB1 5PY,
December 18.

Business letters, page 23

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Diocesan links across the Channel

From the Reverend Canon Roger Greenacre

Sir, Ruth Gledhill's report (December 27) on the planned twinning between Winchester and Florence (which we in Winchester welcome unreservedly and without the least twinge of jealousy) states that the links between dioceses in the Church of England and others around the world "are nearly always with Anglican dioceses or with those of Lutherans or other Protestant churches".

It goes on to say that "Winchester is thought to be the first to open negotiations with a Roman Catholic diocese in Italy".

There are at least five diocesan links between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church in France. Perhaps the oldest is between Winchester and Ravenna after a similar ceremony in Ravenna the previous December. The official delegation which went to Ravenna for the first ceremony included the Dean of Winchester, while the Archbishop of Ravenna was represented in Chichester and Chartres; its origins go back to a civic twinning of the two cities in 1959, which soon extended to a twinning between the two cathedrals and the two dioceses.

The links are now extremely close: the Bishop of Chartres led a pilgrimage of his diocese to Chichester in 1996 and in 1998 the Bishop of Chichester will (for the fourth time since 1977) be leading a pilgrimage from here to Chartres, which will include (for the second time) the participation of our cathedral choir.

Links between dioceses and parishes of the Church of England with their counterparts in France are so frequent that in 1990 the official Anglican-Catholic Committees of

France and England published guidelines for those involved entitled *Twinnings and Exchanges: Guidelines and Exchanges*.

Other European countries are also partners in such twinnings: our own diocese, for example, has very close links with the Church in Bavaria, both with Lutherans in Bayreuth and with Catholics in Bamberg.

Last February an official twinning agreement was signed in Chichester between the cities of Chichester and Ravenna after a similar ceremony in Ravenna the previous December. The official delegation which went to Ravenna for the first ceremony included the Dean of Chichester, while the Archbishop of Ravenna was represented in Chichester and Chartres; its origins go back to a civic twinning of the two cities in 1959, which soon extended to a twinning between the two cathedrals and the two dioceses.

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Call for a start on Severn Barrage

From the Chairman of the Energy Board, Institution of Civil Engineers

Sir, In the wake of the recent Kyoto conference on climate change may I reinforce the call by Professor Ian Fells (letter, December 4) for the building of the Severn Barrage. Completion of this project would provide the UK with pollution-free electricity throughout the next century and beyond, reducing its annual emissions of carbon dioxide by 3 per cent.

With reasonable maintenance the barrage would last indefinitely and its energy source will be virtually unaffected by climate change. It would provide predictable, virtually inflation-proof electricity at a cost of less than 0.5p/kWh following amortisation of the construction debt, compared with a current average "pool" price of some 2.6p/kWh. During its construction, it would provide some 200,000 man-years of employment, much of it away from the barrage site in the manufacturing regions of the UK.

A start on the barrage now, funded through the Private Finance Initiative, would enable substantial completion by 2010. This would meet the Government's objectives of reduced carbon dioxide emissions and greater reliance on renewable energy and sustainable development.

Yours etc,
STEVE TAYLOR,
Chairman, Energy Board,
The Institution of Civil Engineers,
One Great George Street, SW1P 3AA.
December 29.

Cars for cities

From Mr Kenneth Peter

Sir, In 1964 Ernest Marples, then Minister of Transport, appointed "Harold Cox of Metal Box" (later, Lord Kings Norton) to chair a study of the design of vehicles for use in towns. The resultant *Cars for Cities* report was made to Barbara Castle in 1967 but was overshadowed by Labour's attempt to formulate an integrated transport policy.

The study went far beyond mere car design to explore many aspects of urban road transport, from vehicle size and use to pollution and safety. Promoters of very small car designs of the "elk-challenged" kind, such as the new Mercedes (report, November 13), could have saved themselves vast wasted investment had they but read the section on personal transport.

Perhaps Lord Kings Norton's death and your obituary (December 22) will, 30 years on, prompt the present generation of transport policymakers, vehicle manufacturers and traffic engineers to get hold of a copy of his report and re-read it.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
K. PETER
(Administrative Secretary,
Cars for Cities Study, 1964-67,
Westgate Cottage, High Street,
Thornham, Hunstanton PE36 6LX.
December 22.

Social whirl

From Professor Sir Bernard Crickland, FRS, FEng

Sir, Your report of December 11 on the previous evening's "celebrity reception" at No 10 gave prominence to TV and radio personalities who were present. However, you failed to report what I think was of much greater significance, the presence of Mrs Pamela Liversidge, the first Lady President of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in 150 years.

I hope that her invitation was not only a recognition of her success as an engineer and of the key role of women in our profession, but also a recognition of the pivotal importance of engineering in our society.

Yours faithfully,
BERNARD CROSSLAND,
16 Malone Court, Belfast BT9 6PA.
December 16.

Déjà vu

From Mr John F. Martin

Sir, Any of your readers who have grown especially fond of their 1997 calendars may like to know that they can put them away until 2003, when they will be completely accurate apart from the year number. I shall be putting my 1997 calendar (also used in 1996) into extended hibernation until then. Leap years account for the variations in the lengths of these gaps.

For 1998, a calendar for 1987 will suffice.

Yours truly,
JOHN F. MARTIN,
57 Tynehurst Hill,
Loughton, Essex IG10 1BZ.
December 29.

Legislation for life

SOCIAL NEWS

Church news

Appointments

The funeral service for the 8th Marquess will take place at the Parish Church of St Nicholas, Alcester, on Thursday, January 8, at 11.30am, followed by private burial.

Birthdays today

Mr A.M. Allen, former chairman, UKAEA; 73; Mr Gordon Banks, footballer, 60; Professor Sir Roy Caine, FRS, surgeon, 67; Mr Gervais Tallan Davies, Controller, BBC Wales, 54; Mr Bo Diddley, guitarist and singer, 69; General Sir David Fraser, 77; the Hon Sir Archibald Hamilton, MP; 66; Sir John Houghton, FRS, former chief executive, Meteorological Office, 66; Lord Howick of Glendale, 60; Professor Dame Rosalind Hurley, microbiologist, 68; Mr Timothy Mo, writer, 47; the Right Rev Peter Nott, Bishop of Norwich, 64; Lady Oppenheimer, theologian, 71; Mrs Gwen Randall, Head, Framlington College, 47; Professor Michael Redhead, FBA, former Vice-President, Wolfson College, Cambridge, 68; Sir Albert Robinson, company director, 82; Professor A.H.R. Rowe, former Dean of Dental Studies, United Schools of Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals, 72; Professor Robert Shackleton, FRS, geologist, 88; the Duke of Sutherland, 45; Lord Terrington, 82; Sir David Willcocks, former Director, Royal College of Music, 78; Mr Clifford Williams, theatrical director, 71.

University news

UMIST has awarded the following Honorary Degrees: DSC: Mr John Monks, General Secretary of the TUC; Dr James Grigor, former Chairman of the Central Manchester Development Corporation. DEng: Sir Alan Cockshaw, Chairman AMEC. MSC: Mr David Atack, portrait painter.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Otto Kotzebue, navigator, Tallinn, Estonia, 1787; Rudyard Kipling, poet and novelist, Nobel laureate 1907, Bombay, 1865; Stephen Leacock, humorous writer and economist, Swanmore, Hampshire, 1869; Sir Carol Reed, film director, Putney, 1906. DEATHS: Jean Bantxt van Helmont, chemist, Vilvoorde, near Brussels, 1644; Robert Boyle, chemist and physicist, London, 1691; John Needham, priest and man of science, Brussels, 1781; Sir William White Baker, explorer in Africa, Newton Abbot, Devon, 1893; Amelia Bloomer, campaigner for women's rights, 1894; Rufus Isaacs, 1st Marquess of Reading, Lord Chief Justice, 1922.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PEARL ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHS

CHURCH - On December 10th at The National Hospital to Christopher (Giles) Maxson and Charlotte, a daughter, Sophie Rose.

FORSYTH - On Christmas Day, at St Paul's, Bute, Edinburgh, Angus, a son, Oliver.

GRANGE - On December 24th at Robert and Esther (Gillies') a son, Alexander Bryan Stephen. Many thanks to the Revd Dr Alan Charlton, Hospital.

HODGKIN - On December 22nd at The Portland Hospital, to Caroline and Simon, a daughter Victoria, Charlotte.

HODGKIN - On December 12th at The Portland Hospital to Elizabeth (Giles) Keppe and David, a lovely daughter Grace, a sister, for Rose.

HOWARD - On December 23rd, at The Portland Hospital, to Philippa and Stephen, a son, Alexander David, a lovely daughter Grace, a sister, for Rose.

MEDWYNNE - On Christmas Day, 1997, at St Paul's, Bute, Edinburgh, a son, Alexander Bryan Stephen. Many thanks to the Revd Dr Alan Charlton, Hospital.

MILLINGER - On Boxing Day, December 26th to Michaela (Giles) Pizzetti and Simon, a son, Jack Matthew, a cousin for Rose and Grace.

SWINNEY - To Nigel and Karen, at St Paul's, Bute, Edinburgh, on December 22nd, 1997 at Queen's General Hospital, a beautiful girl, Anna Padma, a son, Christopher, 12 days old. December 27th 1997 aged 83. The funeral service will be at Luke's Chapel, 70a Kynren Rd, Kynren, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 2AL.

TORCHES - On December 24th at The Portland Hospital, to Alan and Sophie (Giles) a daughter, Sophie, a sister for Simon.

TRANSMISSIONS - On December 19th at The Portland Hospital, Cassidy Patricia arrived! Born to proud parents Michelle and Nicholas.

WIGAN - On December 27th at The Portland Hospital, to Michaela (Giles) Pizzetti and Simon, a daughter, Anna Padma, a son, Christopher, 12 days old. December 28th 1997 aged 83. The funeral service will be at Luke's Chapel, 70a Kynren Rd, Kynren, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 2AL.

The Rev Peter Taylor, Incumbent, Necton, Holme Hale w North Pickenham and South Pickenham (Norwich); to be also Honorary Canon of Norwich Cathedral.

The Rev Mark Vayro, Team Vicar, Duxton Team Ministry (Ely); to be Priest-in-Charge, Friday Bridge (same diocese).

The Rev David Wallace, NSM, Haddenham w Cuddington, Kingsley and Aston Sandford (Oxford); to be NSM, Wombridge, St Peter and St Paul w Tickford, Oakley and Shabington (same diocese).

The Rev Gordon Warren, Curate, Laleham All Saints (London); to be Rector, Limehouse St Anne (same Diocese).

The Rev Michael Withers, NSM, Bletchley St Mary (Oxford); to be NSM, Ellesborough, the Kimbles and Stoke Mandeville (same diocese).

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Retirements and resignations

The Rev John Aisbitt, Vicar, Horbury w Horbury Bridge (Wakefield) retired October 31.

The Rev Michael Atkinson, Vicar, Great and Little Barfield w The Salings (Chelmsford) to retire December 31.

Canon Christopher Barber, Tewin St John w Tilney All Saints and Tilney St Lawrence (Ely) to retire January 31, 1998.

Canon Derek Buxton, Vicar, Woodhouse St Mary in the Elms and Woodhouse Eaves (Leicester) to retire April 30, 1998.

The Rev Adrian Jones, Rector, Worsley w Barnby and North Cove (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to retire April 30, 1998.

The Rev Antony Lovewell, Industrial Chaplain, Devonport Dockyard (Exeter) to retire December 31.

The Rev Ann MacKethan, Family Life Officer, and representative of FLAME (Durham) to retire December 31 on health grounds.

Canon Clifford Norris, Vicar, Avelay St Michael and Purfleet St Stephen (Chelmsford) to retire January 31, 1998.

The Rev Stanley Price, Vicar, Ipswich with Berkhamsted and Onecone w Bradnop (Lichfield) to resign December 31.



This watercolour of Lake Como, done by Lear after he moved to San Remo, is one of the works on show.

Edward Lear is honoured as a painter

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

AN EXHIBITION on the Italian Riviera of Edward Lear's drawings, paintings and watercolours of Italy, the Mediterranean and the Levant has revealed another side to the man more often thought of in Britain as a writer of nonsense verse.

For the last 18 years of his life Lear lived at San Remo, which in the late 19th century was colonised by the English, thanks to the building of the Calais to Rome railway. He died there in obscurity, cut off from his friends in England, in 1888, at the age of 75.

He first visited San Remo in 1865 with his faithful Albanian servant Giorgio Cocali, and wandered along the coast sketching all the while. His own estimate was that he produced "between ten and twenty thousand" drawings, many of which are now in the Houghton Library at Harvard, which has lent some to the San Remo exhibition. He published an illustrated account of his travels in the Abruzzi, Calabria, Sicily and Albania; one eminent reader was Queen Victoria, who summoned Lear to give her drawing lessons.

So five years later, aged nearly 60, he returned and settled for good, building not one villa but two. The first, the Villa Emily, which he designed himself, suited Lear very well; but while he was away travelling in India (and drawing oriental scenes), an hotel went up between his house and the sea. Distressed, he had another built to the same design near the shoreline, which he called the Villa Tennyson. He claimed the villa had to be a replica so that Foss, his cat, could find his way around.

As Vivien Neailes, an authority on Lear, observes, Lear thought of himself as an artist first and a writer second. His early reputation rested on his precise and vivid bird paintings: from the age of 16 until he was 25 he

made a living as a natural history illustrator and was compared to John Audubon, drawing as he did from life rather than stuffed specimens. His 1832 *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae, or Parrots* is now rare and sought-after. He also gave drawing lessons to young ladies, with the Earl of Derby (President of the newly founded Zoological Society of London) as his patron.

But his ambition was to be a landscape painter, and this – plus his health – took him to Rome in 1837, where he spent 11 years "in a hurry, burly of beauty and wonder", as he wrote to his beloved sister Ann, exploring the Italian countryside, sketching all the while. His own estimate was that he produced "between ten and twenty thousand" drawings, many of which are now in the Houghton Library at Harvard, which has lent some to the San Remo exhibition. He published an illustrated account of his travels in the Abruzzi, Calabria, Sicily and Albania; one eminent reader was Queen Victoria, who summoned Lear to give her drawing lessons.

At the age of 38 Lear returned to England, and became close to the Pre-Raphaelite William Holman Hunt, who gave him advice on oil painting in return for Italian lessons. But his health remained poor, and he spent the winters in Corfu, Albania and Italy, as well as Palestine and Egypt (his magnum opus, a 9ft oil painting called *The Cedars of Lebanon*, is sadly lost), until deciding to settle in San Remo forever, with his servant and cat. "I shall have 28 olive trees and a small bed of onions and a stone terrace, with a grey parrot and two hedgehogs to walk up and down on by day and by night," Lear wrote

with his cat Foss, aged 16.

1885: pen and ink self-portrait of Lear, aged 73½, with his cat Foss, aged 16.

1885: his cat Foss, immortalised in many drawings, died in 1887, and was buried in the villa garden. Lear died the following year; his funeral was attended only by his doctor and his new servant, Giuseppe. Neither the Villa Emily nor the Villa Tennyson still stands, alas; the first was demolished to make way for a block of flats, and the second for a swimming pool.

"But Giovanni Gastaldi, the great-granddaughter of Lear's boulder and good friend, Giovanna Gastaldi, says Lear still lives on in the memory of local people. "The talk in our family was that Lear was a little bizarre," says Signora Gastaldi. "All of a sudden, like a child, he would turn from deepest gloom to joyful exuberance, making my relatives roll with laughter at his imaginative and funny jokes." It seems as good an epitaph for Lear as any.

□ The exhibition is at the Museo Civico, Palazzo Borea D'Olmo, San Remo, until January 11.

His faithful Giorgio died in

1885, and his cat Foss, immortalised in many drawings, died in 1887, and was buried in the villa garden. Lear died the following year; his funeral was attended only by his doctor and his new servant, Giuseppe. Neither the Villa Emily nor the Villa Tennyson still stands, alas; the first was demolished to make way for a block of flats, and the second for a swimming pool.

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1885, and his cat Foss, immortalised in many drawings, died in 1887, and was buried in the villa garden. Lear died the following year; his funeral was attended only by his doctor and his new servant, Giuseppe. Neither the Villa Emily nor the Villa Tennyson still stands, alas; the first was demolished to make way for a block of flats, and the second for a swimming pool.

"But Giovanni Gastaldi, the great-granddaughter of Lear's boulder and good friend, Giovanna Gastaldi, says Lear still lives on in the memory of local people. "The talk in our family was that Lear was a little bizarre," says Signora Gastaldi. "All of a sudden, like a child, he would turn from deepest gloom to joyful exuberance, making my relatives roll with laughter at his imaginative and funny jokes." It seems as good an epitaph for Lear as any.

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OBITUARIES

JAMES LEES-MILNE

James Lees-Milne, FRSL, FSA, conservationist, architectural historian and diarist, died on December 28 aged 89. He was born on August 6, 1908.

By making a success of a National Trust initiative in the 1930s and 1940s, James Lees-Milne's tact did much to save the English stately home. His subsequent lack of tact in publishing his eyewitness account of the period caused embarrassment, but also won him a reputation as one of the great diarists of the mid century.

In 1936 the National Trust formed its country houses committee, and Lees-Milne was sent as an ambassador to owners struggling with death duties and high maintenance costs, to persuade them that the trust could be their saviour. He visited hundreds of properties, evaluating the invaluable, taking notes, suggesting what might be done and calming the nerves of broken down aristocrats. He was closely involved in the preservation of such buildings as West Wycombe Park and Petworth House, Nostell Priory and Faringdon Hall, Cliveden, Knole and Polesden Lacey, as well as repositories of literary history, such as Kipling's Bateman's and Shaw's Corner at Ayot St Lawrence. Even where the properties were not saved, his notes form a valuable record.

His four volumes of diaries from during and shortly after the Second World War are a mischievous mix of architecture and anecdote, irony and indiscretion. Buildings are described in succinct vignettes. Dinton House is "splendidly proportioned, clean-limbed and precise . . . springing straight out of the rough grass"; Pidson Park is "large, shabby, chaotic and comfortable"; whereas Wool House is "a hideous, pretentious, genteel, over-restricted fake just like its inhabitants".

His mother, as he described her, was a chaotic woman, with an "utter indifference to proprieties which never failed to stimulate me". The only snag in his happy filial relationship, he later wrote, "was that I knew myself to be a disappointment to her. I simply could not respond to her rapidly shifting ambitions that I should become, when I grew up, a balloonist, an explorer of Malaysian jungles or the Antarctic . . . a Master of Fox Hounds or a submarine diver." In short, as he put it, "I was a silly child . . . consistent in my longing to become Rouge Dragon Pursuivant".

This ambition enraged his fox-hunting father, George Crompton Lees-Milne, "a good, honourable man" who was loved by his friends, respected by his tenants and liked (curiously enough) by other people's children. Father and son were water and oil. "Art was anathema to him," Lees-Milne later wrote, "it denoted decadence, disloyalty to the Crown, and unnatural vice." And the paternal contempt for intellectuals was profound. "Books of course were taboo." But as Lees-Milne grew up he became increasingly bold and provocative. "By parading an assumed dilettante and aestheticism, I gloried in taunting my wretched father."

The boy was sent to board at a private school at the age of eight, and from there he went to Eton. "I was by orthodox school standards a failure, by Eton ones a 'scug'. I excelled in nothing." But Eton awakened a love of literature and the arts. He spent his last terms discussing books with Mr Bendel, the librarian, listening to Tom Mitford play Bach, and sculling in a "whiff" up the Thames to Queen's Eynot, where he got drunk in the long grass on the riverbank.

Leaving Eton in 1926 he was reunited with his fiery father, who exhorted in reminding him that "all boys who were

and Savile Row tailors, civilised club behaviour and country house weekends.

Lees-Milne did not write them with any intention to publish, so when the first volume appeared in 1975, some of the subjects were distressed and angry. Lees-Milne showed a certain naivety about this. Exquisitely mannered, he had not intended to offend. Censorious reviewers branded him a snob, assiduous cultivator of Nicolson, Pope-Hennessy, Sackville-West and Mitfords. But Lees-Milne outfaced the charge: "I am acutely conscious of and amused by class distinctions," he wrote in the autobiography of his early life, *Another Self* (1970). "I love them and hope they endure forever."

Yet James Lees-Milne did not himself have blue blood. He came of yeoman stock. The Lees side of the family, he would explain, were upgraded to "gentlemen" in the mid 18th century. The Milne side were in the cotton trade. By the time James was born, the family was established in a Worcestershire manor house and possessed of a respectably ample estate. He always loved the county where he grew up, and as the Birmingham suburbs encroached on his rolling pastures, he complained so vociferously that his friend John Betjeman dubbed him "the Worcestershire Grumbler".

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Lees-Milne's own voice could be heard clearly from what was already another era. Further instalments — *Prophecy* (1971), *Caves of Ice* (1983) and *Midway on the Waves* (1985) — were read avidly by a public fascinated by the country houses to which Lees-Milne and the National Trust had given them access.

In 1951 Lees-Milne became adviser on historic buildings to the National Trust, a position he was to hold until his retirement in 1966. In 1957 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, in recognition of a stream of books that began in the 1940s. These included *The Age of Adam* (1947) and *The National Trust Guide to Buildings* (1948), studies of Baroque architecture in Italy, Spain and Portugal, *The Shell Guide to Worcestershire* (1964), *English Country Houses: Baroque 1685-1714* (1970), and biographies of William Beckford, Harold Nicolson, the 2nd Viscount Esher and the 6th Duke of Devonshire. In 1996 he produced a fond, witty series of portraits of *Fourteen Friends*. Two further volumes of diaries appeared in the 1990s (and one is forthcoming), but these were something of a disappointment.

As a nervous and socially attentive young man living in London in the 1920s — "the last carefree social decade which Western civilisation has thoroughly enjoyed" — Lees-Milne had been too shy and penurious to take full advantage of the swinging fun. Yet as he wrote in *Another Self*, he was always and repeatedly falling in love. "It did not seem to me to matter whether with woman or man, provided the one was womanly and the other manly." It was in November 1942 that he first mentioned in his diaries Mrs Anthony Chaplin, wife of the future 3rd Viscount Chaplin, though her presence was overshadowed for him on that occasion by the Princesse de Polignac. By the late 1940s, however, Mrs Chaplin — now referred to simply as Alville — was appearing with increasing regularity. He accompanied her and her husband on a visit to Rome in 1949, and soon found himself swept up into the "absurdities of love". She and her husband divorced amicably, and Lees-Milne married her in 1951. She later made a reputation as a garden designer.

Yet despite the impression of diligent socialising that his diaries give, Lees-Milne enjoyed an increasingly reclusive life. In old age, Chatsworth was almost the only house that could still tempt him to stay away from his own enchanting 17th-century stone house close to the gates of Badminton Park. He commuted daily to Bath, where he worked, writing his books in William Beckford's library in Lansdown Crescent. At home in Gloucestershire he became accustomed to out-facing the wrath of "the master", the former Duke of Beaufort. "What's the point of the Lees-Milnes?" the Duke would roar. "They don't hunt. They don't shoot. What use are they?" Well, the aristocracy habitually fail to recognise their greatest allies. Posterity will judge by more lasting lights.

James Lees-Milne's wife died in 1994. There were no children.

purposes of news scooping" and a year later, on the advice of Stanley Baldwin (who befriended him during a country house weekend), he resigned.

In 1936 the very job for him came into being. The National Trust, which had been formed to preserve precious landscapes, launched a scheme to save some of the historic houses of England. It needed a secretary and Vita Sackville-West recommended Lees-Milne. His father considered it a tragic manifestation of socialism that the public should be allowed to tramp around other people's houses, but Lees-Milne had found his vocation. Apart from a year in the Irish Guards during the war before he was invalided out as an epileptic, he was to spend the next three decades combing the country on borrowed bicycles and in temperamental motor cars and dilatory trains, searching our buildings worthy of preservation.

In 1942 he began his shorthand diary. It was originally intended for his own practical use, but became a uniquely full record of an English way of life that vanished in the wake of the war. When *Anteatal Voices* was published, 30 years on, purposes of news scooping" and a year later, on the advice of Stanley Baldwin (who befriended him during a country house weekend), he resigned.

On taking over as chairman, Hunt was castigated by one institutional investor for his firm's failure to join the prevailing stampede for big speculative developments in the City. Within 48 hours — as Hunt was happy to recall — came the stock market crash on Black Monday.

Peter John Hunt came from a slightly unusual background, in that he was the son of a Professor of French at Royal Holloway College in London University. Evacuated to the United States during the war, he returned to complete his education at Bedford School. From there he went to the College of Estate Management where he took a BSc degree. He also qualified as a chartered surveyor before being commissioned into the Royal Engineers during National Service.

Hunt spent the first four years of his career with a firm of estate agents, Borrett & Borrett, moving to the Chamberlain Group of commercial developers in 1960. Four years later he switched again, this time to Land Securities' subsidiary Ravesent.

His potential soon caught



the attention of Harold Samuel. Several years later Samuel moved him into the group's Piccadilly headquarters as assistant to the chief surveyor, following the takeover of City Centre Properties. In 1973 he made Hunt chief surveyor — his right-hand man — and two years later he took him on to

the board. Hunt became managing director in 1978.

Hunt served on a number of public and professional bodies, including the Covent Garden Market Authority. He served as president of the British Property Federation, 1990-91, and was a trustee of the Architecture Foundation. He was also chairman for the Central London Housing Trust, a charity that provides sheltered housing for old people. His alma mater, the College of Estate Management, made him an honorary fellow and in 1995 he was knighted for his services to the property industry.

A heavily-built man, he played rugby in his younger days and followed it closely throughout his life. In later years, however, he liked to relax on the Thames in his motor-cruiser. Immensely hard-working and at one time smoking 60 cigarettes a day, he was known for his enormous zest for life and sense of fun. He liked to think of himself as being "tough but fair", and was always quick to praise subordinates who did well. Few property developers have won as much respect for their integrity.

His first marriage was dissolved, but he is survived by his second wife Anne, and by a son from his first marriage.

SIR PETER HUNT

Sir Peter Hunt, chairman and managing director of Land Securities, died on December 8 after heart surgery, aged 64. He was born on July 4, 1933.

WHEN Lord Samuel died ten years ago, City analysts thought that his company, Land Securities, would find it

almost impossible to replace him. But Harold Samuel, doyen of the property developers who had turned Land Securities from a small firm owning three houses into the biggest commercial property group in Britain, had already made careful plans for the succession. Into the chairman's office

stepped his protégé, Peter Hunt, who proceeded to guide the group from strength to strength. He continued the conservative strategy of his mentor: long-term investment in wholly owned, preferably freehold, properties, let to tenants such as Esso, Mobil, the Home Office and New Scotland Yard, in some of the

prime locations in the country. But he adapted this strategy to suit changing times, shifting the balance from office space to the retail, trade — including retail warehouses out of town. Under his stewardship, Land Securities prudently avoided the over-expansion of the late 1980s, making sure that all its buildings

were let first. It thus not only escaped the crash which was to follow, but was in a strong position to buy when prices fell.

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His potential soon caught

EVERYMAN THEATRE.

"BRER RABBIT"

By Mabel Dearmer.

Music by Martin Shaw.

"He's the littlest of all the animal", but he always wins," says Uncle Remus. How often and how ingeniously Brer Rabbit scores in this graceful little entertainment! It is all just as it should be and Brer Rabbit would have given his approval. If Brer Rabbit swears he will come to Miss Meadow's frolic on the very back of Brer Fox, his venomous and mortal enemy, is there anybody who does not know that the thing is as good as done? Behold him, therefore, riding in triumph on the despotic animal's back, tugging with light-hearted mischief at the reins and digging his spurs into his enemy's inglorious flanks. Has he shamed sickness, has Brer Rabbit; and the entire animal kingdom and that larger kingdom bounded by invisible nursery walls applaud his cunning. It is the cunning of the brave and gay spirit, the wisdom of

ON THIS DAY

December 30, 1926

MAX SCHMIDT

<p

THE TIMES TODAY

TUESDAY DECEMBER 30 1997

NEWS

Patten eyes London mayor's job

Chris Patten admitted publicly last night that he might like to become the elected mayor of London "if the job was right". But in an interview with *The Times* the last Governor of Hong Kong said that if it was just a matter of choosing someone to be a transmission mechanism for decisions taken by Gordon Brown or John Prescott, "it is going to be difficult to find politicians and non-politicians from the left, right and centre of real class who would want to do it". **Pages 1, 2**

Murder prompts Maze security review

The Northern Ireland office sought to restore confidence in security at the Maze by appointing General Sir David Ramsbotham, the chief inspector of prisons for England and Wales, to inspect the jail after the murder of the loyalist leader Billy Wright, known as King Rat. **Page 1**

Journalist arrested

Dawn Alford, the *Daily Mirror* journalist who trapped a senior minister's son into selling drugs, was arrested for possession of the cannabis she allegedly bought from him. **Pages 1, 14**

Mother found

A woman who abandoned her two-month-old son at a council office has been found wandering the streets of Totnes in a confused state. She is unlikely to be reunited with him soon. **Page 1**

Dome goes missing

An official website features a graphic of the UK with a regional breakdown of how much is being spent by the Millennium Commission. But the Greenwich dome is missing. **Page 2**

Blame for suicide

The family of a man who committed suicide after shooting his psychologically disturbed son said that lack of professional help had led to the tragedy. **Page 4**

Unkind cut

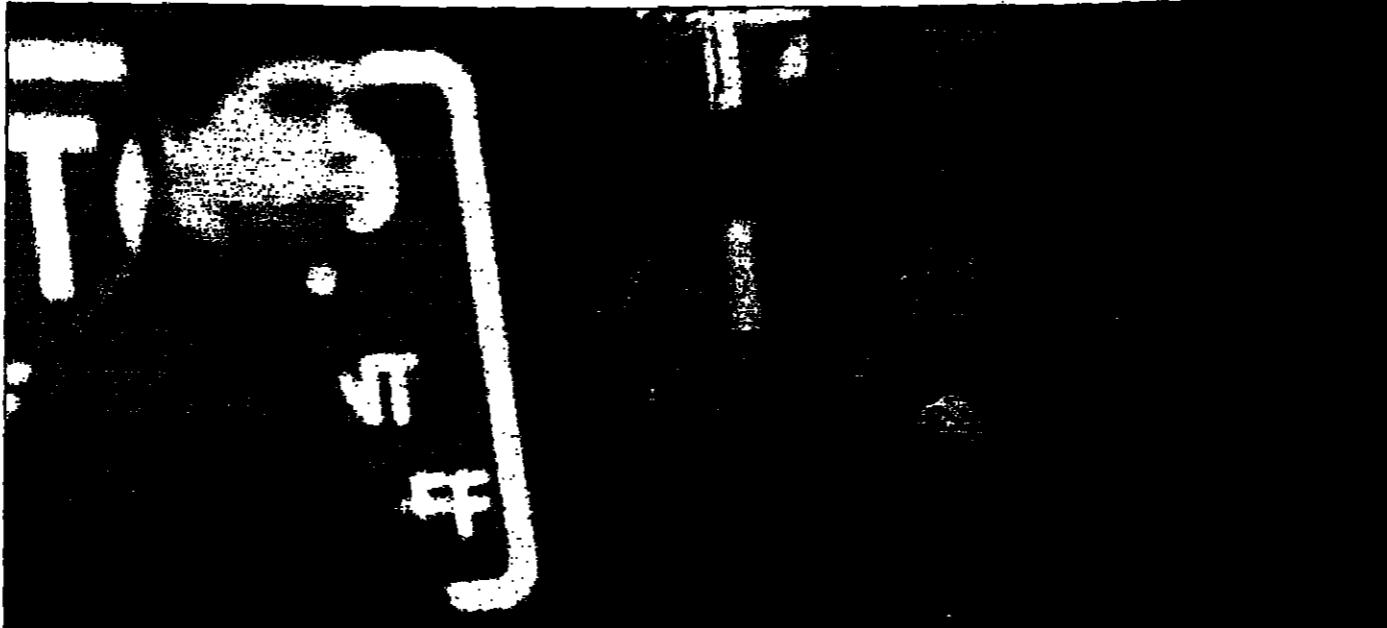
A lifelong horticulturist has been fined £400, with £100 costs, for pruning a sycamore tree in her garden without getting planning permission. **Page 4**

Lawsuit over baby

The family of a woman whose baby died after being born at home threatened legal action against the hospital which they say turned her away. **Page 5**

Blairs take a tropical break

Tony Blair has taken his family to the Seychelles for a week's holiday. They have rented a lodge in the grounds of an old plantation house owned by President René, which was the setting for the erotic film *Goodbye Emmanuelle*. If the sun shines temperatures should reach 30C (86F), but the islands have their heaviest rainfall at this time of year. **Pages 1, 3**



Paratroopers patrolling the perimeter of the Maze prison in Belfast yesterday after Saturday's murder of the loyalist Billy Wright

Korea crisis

British banks met in London to consider their response as part of a global campaign to safeguard the stability of the international financial system. **Page 19**

Stamp: The City's appetite for new flotation has fallen dramatically, with the value of all this year's stock market debutantes expected to drop by two thirds. **Page 19**

Retail: Christmas was late this year according to Goldsmiths, the jewellers and Littlewoods, the store and catalogue group. Both issued trading statements. **Page 19**

Markets: The FTSE 100 index rose 98.5 points to close at 5124. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 104.8 to 105.6 after a rise from \$1.6692 to \$1.6746 and from DM2.9595 to DM2.9883. **Page 22**

Rugby union: Newcastle face a formidable test of their championship potential when they face Leicester Tigers tonight. **Page 31**

Cricket: Michael Atherton will continue to captain England in one-day cricket despite the success of Adam Hollioake in leading the team to the Champions Trophy. **Page 36**

Football: Doubts over the future of Christian Gross, the Tottenham Hotspur head coach, persisted when Fritz Schmidt was refused a work permit to join the club as fitness adviser. **Page 26**

Cricket: Allan Donald became the most successful South Africa bowler in history when he took his 171st Test wicket against Australia in Melbourne. **Page 34**

Rugby union: Newcastle face a formidable test of their championship potential when they face Leicester Tigers tonight. **Page 31**

Cornish cream: England's last baldie, the Launceston poet Charles Causley, talks to Jason Cowley about the loss of innocence that defines his work. **Page 28**

Sheer Bedlam: Two magnificent sculptures that once graced London's infamous insane asylum, Bethlem Hospital, dominate a new exhibition. **Page 29**

Playing away: Washington art critics and art lovers are united in their praise for the "visionary Englishman" Stanley Spencer, while Baltimore plays host to a V&A treasure show. **Page 29**

Home ground: London art shows, including Mark Farrow's drenched visions of natural life and Jordan Baseman's cocktail party photos. **Page 29**

Notable talent: Joseph Erber is a 13-year-old with poor coordination and some obsessive-compulsive behaviour. He is also a talented composer whose skills have been recognised by classical music experts. Now he has turned the cameras on himself to film his own *Video Diaries* for BBC2. **Page 12**

Holiday horrors: Do not throw away all your cares when you go abroad. Dr Thomas Stuttaford on diseases that could strike the unprepared traveller, even in southern Europe. **Page 12**

Landmarks: 1998 marks a half-century of the NHS and the 50th birthday of the Prince of Wales. Jack Lonsdale highlights the year's anniversaries. **Page 13**

Weird year: Sadism, silly suits and Stockport County: David Pannick on the oddest, the best and the worst of the legal year. **Page 30**

TOMORROW
IN THE TIMES

■ INTERFACE
How the computer revolution aims to clean up the air we breathe in 1998

■ HOMES
Will proposed reforms make it easier for a tenant to buy the lease of a property?

The accelerated aid plan for South Korea is showing gratifying early signs of proving effective. The country's leaders must be similarly prompt in meeting their responsibilities. Traditional business methods — not least the corruption and favouritism — will have to end. It is an opportunity for forcing change that will be painful in the short run but vital for Korea's future economic health — *The Los Angeles Times*

CRISPIN ROBINSON

Preview: Bill Patterson plays a new Labour MP undone by sleaze: *Mr White Goes to Westminster* (Channel 4, 9pm). Review: Joe Joseph tries to take his eyes off Tara Fitzgerald. **Page 34, 35**

Benefits in kind

There are three compelling reasons why the Conservatives should support Mr Blair's efforts to reconstruct the welfare state: principle, politics, and plausibility. **Page 15**

Phoenix Berlin

The Berlin Airlift, which began fifty years ago next June, was the West's response to Stalin's attempt to starve West Berlin into submission. **Page 15**

A national treasure

In 1936, when the young Lees-Milne landed his ill-paid and rather humble job with the National Trust, it was primarily concerned with preserving landscape. His work was to span more than half a century. **Page 15**

LIBBY PURVES

It is not revealed whether Ms Alford wriggled, pouted, flicked her hair and flirted with the ministerial offspring in front of his mates, but we can make an educated guess. **Page 14**

TREVOR ROYAL

What makes the survival of Daniel arap Moi, Mugabe and Kaunda so arresting is that it goes against the tide which has been sweeping through Africa since the end of the Cold War. **Page 14**

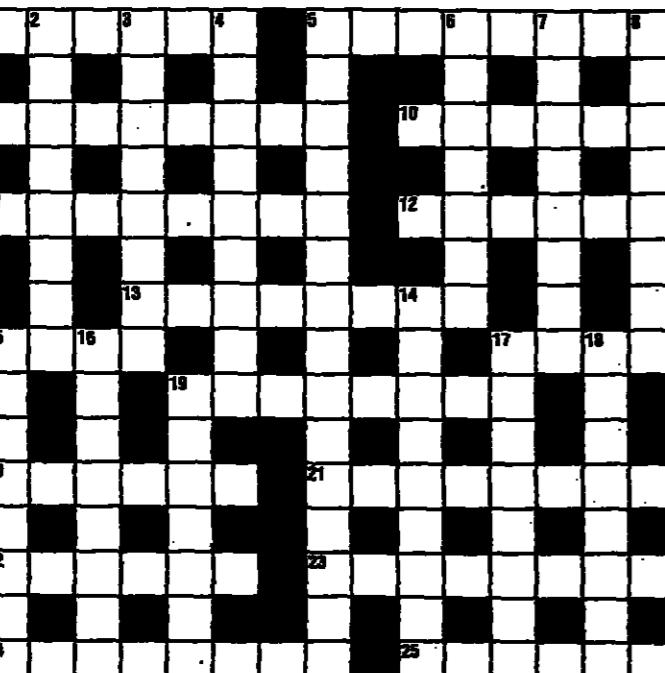
RICHARD CHARTRES

The availability of so many facts in our Information Age can be seriously addictive: the novelist R.L. Stevenson once said that the habit of acquiring general information could even prove fatal if it was not curbed early. **Page 14**

James Lees-Milne, conservationist and diarist; Sir Peter Hunt, chairman of Land Securities. **Page 17**

NHS challenge: "twin" cathedrals; renewable power from the Severn Barrage; Welsh assembly; Oxbridge fees; Church of Ireland and the President; *It's a Wonderful Life*; cars for cities; alternative medicine. **Page 15**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,675



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AA Car Reports by Fax

0 day forecast 0336 416 299
Car from your fax header, you may have to set up post receive mode. AA News of AA cars 0336 416 299

Yesterday: Highest day temp 20C (68F); lowest day max: Scotland, Peru and Kirov 10C (50F); highest rainfall: Preston, Pichincha 0.89m, highest sunshine: Cactus, Essex, 5.1hr

GENERAL: EASTERN ENGLAND AND WALES

will be largely dry in the morning with some east of Scotland outbreaks of rain will reach the west and extend eastwards in the afternoon.

Northern Ireland will be windy with outbreaks of rain, although it will brighten up later with sunshine and squally showers. Scotland will also become increasingly windy with rain spreading from the west, followed later by more showers weather in the north.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, NE England: early patchy drizzle will die out to leave a brighter spell before more rain arrives later in the afternoon. A freshening southerly wind. Max 8-11C (46-52F).

Cont S England, W Midlands, Channel Isles, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England: it will be dry and bright at first, but more rain will move in later. Freshening southerly wind. Max 8-11C (46-52F).

Cont S England, W Midlands, Channel Isles, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England: it will be dry and bright at first but increasingly cloudy with rain moving in from the west later. Strong southerly wind. Max 8-11C (46-52F).

SW England, Wales: dry at first but more rain will move in from the west later. Strong southerly wind. Max 8-11C (46-52F).

Outlook: New Year's Eve will be cold and windy with sunshine and showers. Showers will be most frequent in north and west. Snow on hills in the north. New Year's Day will be very windy with rain sweeping in from the west.

Changes to the chart below from noon: low H will run northwards and deepen rapidly; high D will edge east with little change in central pressure.

WIND. MAX 9-12C (46-54F).

■ Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: early drizzle dying out but mainly cloudy with heavier rain by afternoon. South to south-easterly wind will touch land in places. Max 7-10C (45-50F).

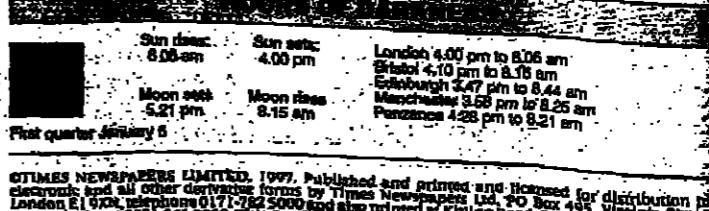
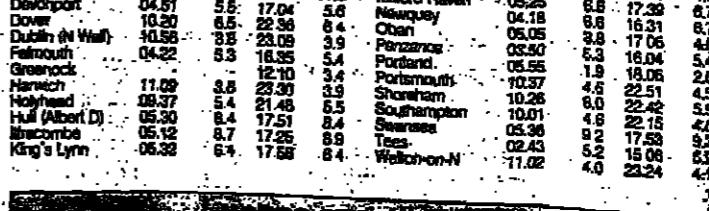
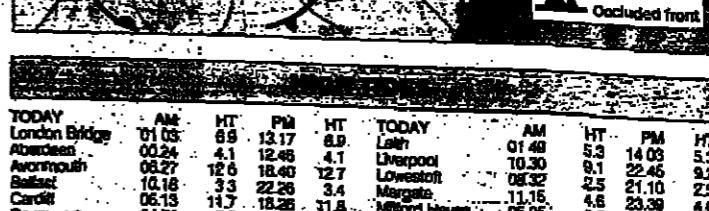
■ SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, NW Scotland: cloudy and blustery with outbreaks of rain. Strong to gale-force south to southeasterly wind. Max 8-10C (46-52F).

■ N Ireland: any early dry weather will not last as rain spreads from west. Brighter but showery later. Strong to gale-force southerly wind. Max 10C (50F).

■ Repub of Ireland: wet and windy. Some heavy rain, especially early and late. Strong or gale-force southerly winds. Mid, max 10-12C (50-54F).

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ACROSS

- 50 cent cut is a big lump! (6)
- 5 Bishop, for one, requiring church to get manse renovated (9)
- 9 Beach jumper (4,4)
- 10 Gun shot, hitting two targets in succession (6)
- 11 This type of grass plagues late batsons (4,4)
- 12 Playing football, the means that justifies the ends? (4-2)
- 13 Searching check in drug trial (4,4)
- 14 Audibly disapprove of king who has bad manners? (4)
- 15 Plays part or play parts (4)
- 16 Pot in danger about first of April? August, actually? (8)
- 17 Abused lady in ancient language (6)
- 21 R. Crusoe, wrecked, needs energy and initiative (8)
- 22 Small, nasty, tailless beetle (6)

Solution to Puzzle No 20,674

EPICLOTTIS SAGO
EE R H A H L
ENTRACTE LEFWAY
P M H R O L S
PURISUE MINDLESS
S S A F
CHIC TOLLBRIDGE
E R A S T
TREASSESS HEEL
I O O A
CAROUSEL NUDITY
V M D O E I A
BEHAVE MUTINIES
H R E O C G N
STAY PENNYWORTH

Times Two Crossword, page 36

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper makes up 40.6% of the newspapers in the second half of 1996

Temperatures of modish local time on Sunday X = not available

London 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm
Bristol 4.03 pm to 8.15 pm
Bath 4.07 pm to 8.44 pm
Birmingham 4.09 pm to 8.25 pm
Manchester 4.12 pm to 8.51 pm

London 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm
Bristol 4.03 pm to 8.15 pm
Bath 4.07 pm to 8.44 pm
Birmingham 4.09 pm to 8.25 pm
Manchester 4.12 pm to 8.51 pm

London 4.00 pm to 8.00 pm
Bristol 4.03 pm to 8.15 pm
Bath

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY DECEMBER 30 1997



Barry Gibson said that consumers were now shopping even later in the run-up to Christmas while the catalogues division gave Littlewoods a boost

Littlewoods fails to lift spirits in high street

BY FRASER NELSON

LITTLEWOODS yesterday became the first leading retailer to confirm that the peak Christmas shopping season fell well below expectations.

The privately owned company said sales in its department stores were 7 per cent lower in the nine weeks to December 21. A last-minute spurt appears to have eased the pain, with sales down just 1 per cent in the final three weeks.

The company, one of Britain's biggest retailers, played down the setback, claiming like-for-like sales were up about 5 per cent after adjusting for discontinued product lines such as wines and spirits and children's clothing.

Barry Gibson, chief executive, said: "Our results seem to reflect a mood by the consumer to shop even later. The last three or four weeks were very strong and took us off by surprise, so we are very happy. We pursued full-price sales, and didn't start discounting until after Christmas — and we have been able to make margin increases as a result."

Littlewoods has long been regarded as the high street's sleeping giant, having underperformed many of its rivals for several years. Efforts have recently been made to revitalise the chain, with a new manage-

ment at the helm, and its latest figures may reflect a degree of recovery against the background of generally subdued retail demand this Christmas.

Robert Miller, director of retail research at Kleinwort Benson, said it was still too soon to pass judgment on Christmas sales. "It is a mixed picture," he said. "They [Littlewoods] had a good, late Christmas in home shopping. It was always their plan to protect gross margin, so the sales figures are not that surprising." Clive Vaughan, an analyst at Ver-

street Christmas sales, but added weight to reports of a substantial rush in the three days before Christmas.

Robert Miller, director of retail research at Kleinwort Benson, said it was still too soon to pass judgment on Christmas sales. "It is a mixed picture," he said. "They [Littlewoods] had a good, late Christmas in home shopping. It was always their plan to protect gross margin, so the sales figures are not that surprising." Clive Vaughan, an analyst at Ver-

dict, the research house, said: "When the dust has settled, there will almost certainly be like-for-like growth for the retailers. They were expecting a great boom and bonanza but what they have got was quite an ordinary good Christmas." Other leading retailers are not expected to publish trading statements until early in the new year.

Goldschmidt, the jewellery chain founded by Jurek Piasiecki, played down fears of a high street slowdown. It said

its 130 shops had seen overall sales increase 14 per cent in December, and a 7.9 per cent increase on a like-for-like basis. Shares of Goldschmidt added 12.5p to 27.5p.

Money circulation figures from the Bank of England added to the evidence suggesting a late spending spree in the three shopping days before Christmas. The Bank said that bank withdrawals were up 2.6 per cent in the last week of December — double the increase a month earlier.

Littlewoods' results were finally awaited as the first solid indicator of the Christmas season. Fears of a high street meltdown had been heightened by Knickerbox, the lingerie chain, which fell into administration last week. It blamed "appalling" high street sales before Christmas.

Barclays Bank has added its voice to the growing number of financial institutions sceptical about a retail slump. It said sales through its Barclaycard had risen 8 per cent in the last weekend of Christmas, excluding the three shopping days that Littlewoods credited with providing much of its sales growth.

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Big Apple has rotten time

US RETAILERS also complain that Christmas sales were worse than expected despite low unemployment and continuing strong economic growth (Oliver August writes from New York).

Analysts predict several chains are ripe for bankruptcy after the failure of Nobody Beats The Wiz, an electronics group. Christmas sales had been expected to grow by 4.5 per cent, but early estimates point to growth of about 3 per cent. Retailers started to discount goods before Christmas. Even large department stores such as Macy's were forced to cut prices by up to 50 per cent in the third week of December.

For the past two years sales growth in the Christmas period has hovered around 3 per cent. In the preceding three years, growth reached between 7 and 8 per cent. The

Christmas period usually accounts for 25 per cent of US retailers' annual sales.

Rosalind Wells, an economist at the National Retail Foundation, said: "It doesn't look like it's going to be a barbary, which is disappointing because the economy is so good."

None of the large retail chains has made any trading statements so far. But Sears said the post-Christmas period would be vitally important to this year's sales performance.

A number of US chains are fighting for survival. Nobody Beats The Wiz, a stereo and video retailer, suffered from a margin squeeze and is now looking to be acquired. Other troubled chains include Caldor and Bradlees. Retail analysts are predicting that the shakeout expected in 1997 will now take place in 1998.

Value of flotation slumps as buyouts break record

BY MARTIN WALLER

THE CITY'S appetite for new company flotations has slumped dramatically, with the value of all this year's stock market debuts expected to fall by two-thirds once the figures for 1997 have been totted up. But by contrast the buyout business is booming and set to reach a record high.

A study by KPMG Corporate Finance shows that institutional investors are shunning smaller companies, with the value of all those businesses coming to market falling from £10.1 billion in 1996 to just £5.5 billion this year, excluding demergerisations.

But the Centre for Management

Buyout Research says the total value of UK buyouts and buy-ins will break the £10 billion barrier this year, £2.6 billion higher than in 1996, which was itself a record.

Neil Austin, head of new issues at KPMG Corporate Finance, said institutions had huge cash flows to invest but were unwilling to pick through new issues in search of value. Bigger stocks outperformed their smaller brethren this year, leading institutions to focus their investment policy on larger companies. Meanwhile the consolidation taking place among fund managers meant there were fewer buyers.

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Balance shifts at Lloyd's as 2,000 names resign

BY JON ASHWORTH

MORE THAN 2,000 names are resigning from the Lloyd's insurance market, tipping the scales in favour of corporate capital members for the first time.

Corporate members, admitted for the first time just three years ago, will speak for £6 billion of capacity at Lloyd's in 1998, compared with £4.5 billion in 1997. Their share of capacity rises from 44 per cent to 59 per cent. Lloyd's will be able to underwrite up to £10.3 billion in potential insurance claims next year, slightly down on £10.3 billion in 1997.

Just over 2,000 names — individuals who use their wealth to back under-

writing at Lloyd's — are to cease underwriting with effect from December 31. About 6,835 names will continue to underwrite on an unlimited liability basis in 1998, supplying £4.03 billion of capacity. Numbers peaked at 32,000 worldwide in 1988, before a string of disasters prompted a run of crippling insurance claims.

About 1,105 names will continue underwriting for 1998 on a limited liability basis. Sir David Rowland, the departing chairman of Lloyd's, is among those to have taken advantage of conversion vehicles allowing them to limit their losses.

Max Taylor takes office as chairman of Lloyd's on Friday.

Davies jets to £1m Airtours bonus

BY DOMINIC WALSH

ROGER DAVIES, who stepped down in April as chairman of Going Places, the travel agency arm of Airtours, was given a £1 million bonus earlier this year under a shadow share option scheme.

Mr Davies, who remains a non-executive director of Airtours, received total remuneration in 1997 of £1.19 million, compared with just £290,000 in 1996. The £1 million bonus was paid out under the terms of a previous long-term

option scheme based on the company's share performance. Since the travel industry's annus horribilis in 1995, when overcapacity led to severe discounting, shares in Airtours have soared from less than 40p to £12.10, at yesterday's close. Earlier this month, the group unveiled a 59 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £120 million, and reported that bookings for next summer were running 15 per cent of a year ago.



Crossroads total pay rises

BUSINESS
TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5112.4	(+98.5)
Yield	3.17%	
FTSE All share	2396.74	(+38.67)
Nikkei	14775.22	(-27.38)
Dow Jones	7768.43	(-107.12)*
S&P Composite	950.27	(+13.51)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5.1%	(n/a)
Long Bond	102.5%	(...)
Yield	5.92%	(...)

LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	7.4%	(7.4%)
Libor 3-month	12.2	(12.1%)

STERLING

New York	1.6705*	(n/a)
London	1.6746	(1.6707)
Paris	2.0988	(2.0950)
Frankfurt	2.9240	(2.9225)
SF	2.4200	(2.3980)
Yen	217.51	(216.69)
£ Index	105.6	(104.8)

USD/JPY DOLLAR

London	1.7965*	(n/a)
FF	5.9750*	(...)
SF	1.4472*	(...)
Yen	130.07	(130.07)
S Index	108.7	(108.4)

Tokyo close Yen 130.08

* denotes midday trading price

THE traditional Christmas rally in share prices got under way as investors shrugged off worries about subdued high street trading and the financial crisis in the Far East. The FTSE 100 index rose 9.5 to 5,122.4. However, with just two days' share trading left this year it seems unlikely the 1997 closing peak of 5,330.8, struck in October, will be challenged.

Trading was also lively on the foreign exchange, where the pound rose almost three pence to DM2.9883 and half a cent to \$1.6746, lifting the pound index to 105.6, against a 12-month high of 106.6.

In Tokyo, the Economic

Planning Agency said that some of a group of ten Japanese banks were willing to roll over short-term credits to South Korea.

In Frankfurt, Deutsche

Bank pledged "constructive co-operation" from German

banks which met yesterday. It

said: "The participants of the discussions regarded it as a priority to safeguard the stability of the international financial system."

The round of top level bank

meetings coincided with the

first evidence of the devastating

effect of the financial crisis

on Asian economies.

In South Korea, figures

showed that domestic manufac-

turing orders fell 34.6 per cent in

the last week of the year.

The Government of South

Korea yesterday approved leg-

islation to reform its financial

sector. A key committee in

South Korea's National As-

sembly approved legislation

which should lead to the

passing, as early as next week,

Saving for pensions 'too low'

By CAROLINE MERRELL

LANE Clark & Peacock, the leading firm of actuaries, claims that employees need to save nearly a quarter of their salary in a pension to have an adequate retirement.

Bob Scott, a partner at the company, said: "While the Government claims to be committed to encouraging personal investment in long-term pensions provision, the rhetoric is not matched by their policies, which are now actively discouraging individuals from saving adequate sums for their retirement."

According to Lane Clark & Peacock, an individual with national average earnings of £21,000 a year would hope to retire on half income and a lump sum of 1.5 times final earnings. A final pension fund of £240,000 would be needed whereas five years ago it would have been £180,000.

The actuary claims that a typical individual would have to save 24 per cent of salary each year to reach the £240,000 target. The proportion that needs to be saved is more than the Inland Revenue target.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sale
Australia \$	2.65	2.47
Austria Sch	21.88	20.22
Belgium Fr	84.76	59.00
Canada \$	1.30	1.29
Cyprus Cyp	0.918	0.947
Denmark Kr	11.97	11.05
Finland Mark	0.92	0.89
France Fr	10.45	9.69
Germany Dm	3.15	2.91
Greece Dr	467	458
Hong Kong \$	15.73	14.25
Iceland Kr	1.32	1.12
Ireland P	1.21	1.12
Israel Shek	3.12	2.97
Japan Yen	222.23	214.70
Malta	0.867	0.828
Netherlands Gld	3.859	3.729
New Zealand \$	3.01	2.77
Norway Kr	12.85	11.92
Portugal Esc	317.53	295.90
SAudi Rial	264.23	245.50
Switzerland Fr	13.92	12.62
Sweden Kr	2.57	2.35
Turkey Lira	30.67	30.20
USA \$	1.77	1.68

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Corporate failures drop to lowest level for seven years

By RICHARD MILES

BUSINESS failures have fallen to their lowest level for seven years, according to the annual insolvency survey by Dun & Bradstreet, the financial information company.

The number of UK businesses going to the wall fell nearly 5,000 during 1997 to 36,368. Dun & Bradstreet said the annual tally was now close to pre-recession levels.

This year's 1.5 per cent fall in the business failure rate is the biggest since 1994, when the number of insolvencies

declined by 22 per cent, and the second-biggest this decade. Philip Mellor, senior analyst at Dun & Bradstreet, attributed the decline in business failures to the steady growth in the British economy coupled with tougher restrictions on borrowing imposed by banks.

Mr Mellor said: "Provided there is no substantial downturn in the economy, the country's annual tally of business casualties will be back to pre-recessionary levels by the millennium."

He added that the fall-off in

exports remained a concern, in spite of the fact that it had been partially offset by a surge in domestic demand. The financial crisis in South-East Asia could also add to the woes of British companies in some sectors.

Larger companies fared much better than their smaller peers, with the tumble in big corporate liquidations — down 15.9 per cent to 15,470 — twice that of small firms, among which bankruptcies fell 7.9 per cent to 20,896.

Although every region of the UK experienced a fall in

business failures, some areas of the country saw sharper drops than others. The steepest drop in the casualty rate occurred in the East Midlands, down by 18.9 per cent, followed by the East (16.6 per cent) and the South West (15.8 per cent).

By contrast, the West Midlands and Scotland saw only marginal falls in the number of bankruptcies, slipping just 0.7 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. Indeed, the rate of bankruptcy among smaller firms in the West Midlands increased 9 per cent, com-

pared with an average national fall of 7.9 per cent. Mr Mellor said the rise in failures among the region's smaller enterprises could be blamed on the fall-off in exports. Suppliers to larger companies had borne the brunt of the decline in international trade, he said.

The Dun & Bradstreet insolvency survey, compiled every year since 1980, is based on government records and other sources of business information. During this decade, business failures peaked at 62,767 in 1992.

Daimler sales rise 20% to exceed £40bn

By CHRIS AVRES

DAIMLER-BENZ, Germany's largest industrial group that includes Mercedes-Benz cars and Daimler-Benz Aerospace, yesterday said that sales in 1997 had risen almost 20 per cent to top £40 billion.

The healthy provisional sales figures came in spite of technical problems with Mercedes' small A Class car and its Smart car. The luxury car division suffered a public relations disaster earlier this year when the A Class was found to dip over in the so-called "moose test", where a driver swerves violently to avoid an animal in the road.

Jürgen Schrempp, Daimler's chairman, said: "We are more success-oriented than before and more efficient — a force to be reckoned with. This is clear from the figures and our rapid, customer-oriented responses to challenges such as the A Class and Smart." He said Mercedes, Daimler's largest division, had lifted sales in 1997 by 14 per cent to more than £17 billion. His statement came after Daimler denied reports

that further technical problems would also delay the launch of its top-of-the-range Mercedes S Class model. The car is expected to be on sale in October 1998.

Daimler said that all four of its divisions — passenger cars, commercial vehicles, aerospace and services — were profitable, and that operating profit in the second half of 1997 would be higher than the £610,000 earned in the first period. Precise figures will be released at the end of the first quarter of 1998.

Herr Schrempp said: "We started 1997 with the introduction of a new, more efficient company structure. We can now finish 1997 with dynamic growth, a motivated workforce and a significant improvement in profit."

Commercial vehicle sales rose more than 20 per cent to £13 billion, ahead of expectations. Sales in Daimler's services division, Daimler-Benz InterServices, rose about 19 per cent to hit a record of more than £5 billion.



Jürgen Schrempp said Daimler was more efficient

Catastrophe cost falls 50% to £18bn

By A CORRESPONDENT

THE world suffered an unusually low number of natural disasters in 1997 but faces a sharply rising risk from global warming and weather disruptions, Munich Re, the world's largest reinsurer, said yesterday.

Munich Re's annual review of global disasters found only 530 "large loss events", well below the usual tally of between 800 and 900. However, Munich Re believes the long-term trend in catastrophes remains on the increase and disasters will become more frequent and more costly. Global warming, attributed to increased greenhouse gas emissions, and weather disruptions will pose an ever greater threat, it says.

Most of the damage in 1997 was done by wind storms and floods. Munich Re said economic losses from such disasters came to \$30 billion (£18 billion) in 1997, half the previous year's total. But the human toll was more severe — about 13,000 people killed compared to 12,000 in 1996.

The international insurance industry paid out around \$4.5 billion as a result of natural disasters, down from about \$9 billion the previous year.

Dowding chief dies

DOWDING AND MILLS, the electrical and mechanical repair company, yesterday announced the death of Jim Cole, chairman and chief executive. Mr Cole, who had been with the company for 43 years, died suddenly on Boxing Day. The company said that Simon Sharp, a non-executive director, has been named acting chairman until a permanent appointment is made. The company said that Mr Cole had devoted his working life to Dowding & Mills and that he had made an immense contribution throughout his years of service.

Raymond wins at Tepnel

THE boardroom battle for control of Tepnel Life Sciences has been won by the faction led by Peter Raymond. At yesterday's annual meeting Stephen Minter, leader of a rebel board faction, was not re-elected as a director, and the resolution to remove Mr Raymond was defeated. Mr Raymond became chairman, replacing retiring chairman Kit Madden. Last week three potential directors nominated by the Minter faction withdrew their candidatures. Yesterday's statement said that Anthony Warburton, who backed the rebel Minter faction, will remain as finance director.

Tyco grows in US

TYCO INTERNATIONAL, seeking to expand its home security business in the North East of America, has signed an agreement to buy Holmes Protection Group for \$107 million cash. Tyco, a manufacturing and service company, said it will integrate Holmes, a New York maker and monitor of residential and commercial security systems, into its ADT Security Services division. Tyco, based in Bermuda, said that under the agreement it will begin a \$17-a-share tender offer for the 6.3 million outstanding shares of Holmes, which has 65,000 customers, mainly in the northeast US.

UniChem deal approved

THE merger of UniChem, the retail chemists group, and Alliance Santé, the European healthcare company, cleared its final hurdle yesterday after the plan was approved at a shareholders' extraordinary meeting. The marriage will create Europe's second-largest drugs wholesale and retailing company and value Alliance UniChem at £70 million. UniChem, which runs the Moss chemists chain, said the deal would give it access to the French, Italian and Spanish markets to buy continental products and to supply them to its UK customers.

Copper at four-year low

COPPER prices fell to their lowest for four years on the London Metal Exchange although traders said that business was dull with trade slow to develop immediately after the post-Christmas recess. The selling was attributed mostly to chart-based activity, after the long-holiday weekend. An increase in stocks of 2,100 tonnes did not help. Prices fell to \$1,720 (£1,011), down \$45 a tonne from the close on Christmas Eve. Copper's previous low of the year was \$1,740, achieved earlier this month, the lowest since January 1994.

Enviromed bid hopes

SHARES in Enviromed, the healthcare group, rose from 6p to 7p yesterday after the group said that it had been in talks during the past six months with a potential bidder. However, Enviromed added that although these discussions had ceased some months ago, the company "is not in a position to rule out the possibility of an offer in the future". It added that shareholders should note that the offer price previously discussed "would have been at a substantial discount to the current share price".

Broker's Indian venture

WILLIS CORROON, the insurance broker, has agreed to establish Willis Corroon Tower (Private) Ltd, which will operate as a reinsurance broker and consultant on insurance and risk management in India. Willis Corroon Tower, which will be based in Bombay, will be a joint venture between the group and Tower Insurance and Reinsurance Services with Willis having a substantial majority interest. The new company is expected to take over the reinsurance business of Tower and Willis in India before the end of March.

P&O Australia expands

P&O AUSTRALIA has bought three Queensland island resorts from Qantas for A\$25 million (£10 million). The resorts are the 16-villa Bedarra island retreat, the 148-unit Dunk island resort and the 108-unit Brampton resort in the Whitsunday region. Richard Hein, P&O Australia managing director, said the company is very pleased with the purchase. He said: "We paid a fair price. We looked at it very early in the piece but the price at that time was a bit high." The acquisition will double P&O Australia's resort holdings.

French hypermarkets group drops bid for Casino

French hypermarkets group drops bid for Casino

CONTINENT'S entente cordiale

By GEORGE SIVELL

PROMODES, the French retailer that runs the Continent hypermarkets, has dropped its offer for rival Casino and announced a co-operation deal, admitting that it would not be able to win the hostile bid. Both sides have dropped all legal action and both said that the deal would lead to a joint attack on international development in foreign markets.

The bid has been raging since September. Promodes and Casino said in a joint statement: "The companies Promodes on the one hand, Casino and Rallye on the other, are convinced that changes in the world of retailing necessitate co-operation accords when these are

in the mutual interests of parties and respect their independence."

"They have decided to establish between them such relations and to end the differences that opposed them." Both sides are looking to overcome the limited expansion potential of the domestic French market. The French Government imposed strict limitations on the building of new hypermarkets as a way of protecting smaller, more traditional French shops and commercial life generally in French rural communities.

The restrictions have increased the value of shares in existing supermarket chains, which are now looking at takeovers and expansion abroad as the main route to growth. Promodes shares

rose 2.6 per cent to Fr 2,486 (£250), although both Casino and Rallye shares were suspended. Promodes said in November that it had abandoned part of its bid — for the Casino holding company Rallye — but was maintaining the offer for Casino itself.

Rallye, however, subsequently adopted the role of a white knight, exercising share warrants to fend off Promodes.

Antoine Gauthier, the head of a group of family shareholders in Casino, said that "a good agreement is better than a long dispute". He added that the agreement was in the interests of each party and was particularly beneficial for Casino, which would retain independence under the amicable takeover by Rallye.

Three-way battle in Singapore phone deal

AT&T, Singapore Telecom and Singtel

have agreed to merge their local telephone units

in a deal worth \$1.5 billion (£800 million)

AT&T and Singapore Telecom will

each contribute 40 per cent to the new

entity, which will be called Singtel

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The Halifax predicts the rise in house prices has peaked. Next year the average increase will be just 5 per cent, compared with increases of around 12 per cent in 1997, according to the bank.

The forecast will cause post-Christmas indignation in some parts of central London, where buyers paid exorbitant prices for their posh residences in the absurd hope that rises of up to 40 per cent in 1996 may be repeated.

But elsewhere in the country the Halifax forecast will be met with refreshing indifference because it simply confirms what homeowners have known all along. In the provinces the value of a suburban three-bedroom house has generally changed very little. Advances of slightly above the rate of inflation are not unusual.

In some parts of the country prices have actually trailed behind the rate of inflation. Negative equity, where borrowers owe their lenders more than the value of the home, is not the demon it once was, but it has certainly not been eradicated and will probably continue to haunt more unfortunate homeowners for some years.

The Halifax, along with other lenders, appears to have been wrong-footed by the headline increase of 12 per cent in 1997, having predicted an increase closer to 7 per cent.

But their miscalculation can easily be explained by the

extraordinary performance of the property market in London, where house prices were pushed higher and higher by an influx of foreign buyers and by City traders enriched by bonuses. Predictions for other regions have proved far more accurate.

Cynics might argue that if the Halifax got it wrong in 1997 there is no good reason to take the 1998 forecast seriously.

However, the property bonanza in London is certain to run out of steam. First, the current round of City bonuses, awarded against deals done in 1997, will be followed by major consolidation among banks that have fallen prey to foreign takeovers in the final quarter. Job losses of a major scale are inevitable. Secondly, those big-time Asian buyers of London property are likely to be in short supply, need time to address problems closer to home.

The irony is that a Labour Chancellor inherited this benign market after a succession of Conservative residents at Number 11 found their policies were undermined by the volatility of the mortgage market.

Long may this benign housing market continue. There is now a generation of first-time buyers

who have acquired a home in which to live and not just to make a quick profit by turning it up and selling it on. The nightmare that was the housing market in the late 1980s is something that is quite simply beyond their understanding.

Mortgages are affordable and the number of houses bought and sold remains steady at £5 million a year. People are moving for the right reasons.

Mixed signs in the high street

High street sales, that other barometer of consumer confidence, are sending out mixed signals. Shopping centres are teeming with bargain hunters, cashpoints cannot keep pace with demand for money and credit card companies are working flat out to process transactions.

But retailers are glum. It is

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

now generally accepted that trading in the days before Christmas failed to live up to expectations. This is not only true in Britain but also in America, where anecdotal evidence has an uneasy echo of retailers' experience this side of the pond. Yesterday Littlewoods reported a 1 per cent fall in sales at its department stores in the three weeks to December 27.

In the UK more than £3 billion of stock was left unsold and must now be shifted at any price. Happy days indeed for the dogged hunter of heavily discounted goods. Less so for shareholders, who anxiously await those trading statements that have become as integral a part of the first fortnight of the new year as turkey is at Christmas.

Yet if ever there was to be a good Christmas for shopkeepers, this was it. Punters are hardly short of cash. It is hard to believe there would be no residual

benefit from the £36 billion windfall from dermatulations. Unemployment is still falling, wages are rising. Pre-Christmas surveys suggested seasonal spending would rise 5 per cent to about £535 per person.

It is still far from certain that Christmas was such a disaster for retailers. What has become clear is that shops are hopelessly out of touch with their customers.

With one or two notable exceptions retailers no longer know what customers want to buy or what they are prepared to pay. Few retailers know the difference between quantity and real choice. Christmas stock is ordered in late summer and looks out of date by December. Popular lines run out. Why is it that the music industry could supply millions of copies of Elton John's *Candle in the Wind* at a moment's notice while toy shops ran out of *Teddybears* long before Christmas?

Good retailers who under-

stand their customers will thrive in any market. The enduring success of Marks & Spencer and, more recently, the success of Tesco is a lesson that most fashion retailers — take note all you Laura Ashley — and dear old WH Smith would do well to learn.

Time for ITV to boost reception

As well as unsettled weather you can be sure that 1998 will bring bad news for the big ITV companies — a bleak outlook that will go far beyond disappointing Christmas ratings or ITV losing audience share for the past five years. Consultants are concluding that ITV is being thrashed within an inch of its life and will fade before the onslaught of multi-channel television unless something is done urgently.

It is in the interests of most of the ITV companies for it to be so. They must decide within the next few months whether to apply for new ten-year licences to run from 1999 or wait until 2001 as is their right. It is then up to the Independent Television Commission to place a value on the

licences and, in particular, how much the companies have to pay to the Government in special taxes. At the moment ITV pays around £400 million a year to the Government and hopes the ITC will drastically reduce the total. As a result analysts suspect there will be a terrible temptation to play a new party game — Minimise the Profit.

The reality is that ITV is still a nice little earner, if no longer a licence to print money, and despite intensifying competition is likely to dominate prime time viewing in the UK for the foreseeable future. Watch for the ITC evening up the burden between those who bid low and those who bid high for their licences but the overall reduction could be modest — however much the ITV companies sound like farmers facing a lifetime of bad harvests.

Get-out Claus

CHAMPAGNE corks will be popping again at BT's Newgate Street headquarters in this festive season. The word on Wall Street is that MCI is ready to hit investors with a \$750 million charge in the fourth quarter, against restructuring. This follows the \$515 million bombshell in the third quarter, which sent BT diving for cover and delivered MCI to WorldCom. BT, which made a \$3 billion profit on its MCI stake, has much to be thankful for this Christmas.

MCI likely to charge £450m in last quarter

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

MCI, the US telecoms group, is expected to announce a charge of \$750 million (£450 million) against profits at the end of January (See Commentary, this page).

The fourth-quarter charge tops the \$315 million charge announced in the autumn that coincided with the end of BT's alliance with MCI.

BT shareholders pushed through a cut in the takeover price the UK telecoms group was going to pay after MCI forecast losses last summer.

The price cut opened the way for a successful \$37 billion

bid by WorldCom. The new charge will reaffirm the belief of some UK investors that BT was right not to match WorldCom's bid. Some of the new charges, however, would not have been incurred if the BT takeover had gone ahead.

MCI is believed to be preparing to spend extra money on job cuts, employee bonuses and the upgrade of computer systems. Frank Gorniak, an analyst at CS First Boston, said: "MCI plans to announce three charges in the fourth quarter that should clean up the books a bit in anticipation of the merger with WorldCom next year."

Mr Gorniak expects revenue growth of about 5 per cent for MCI's fourth quarter. He said: "For the first time all MCI is experiencing net positive additions of residential customers." The losses that sparked the BT revolt last summer originated from the residential customer market.

An MCI spokesman declined to comment on the specifics of the charges. He said: "We are evaluating our options and want to improve returns." The company said it works with analysts on an ongoing basis to provide guidance.

As part of the \$750 million pre-tax charge, MCI will spend \$200 million on paying off sacked employees, \$300 million on bonuses and customer incentive schemes and \$250 million on its computer systems.

Ever since WorldCom won the takeover battle with BT in October, MCI has had problems retaining staff. Hundreds of top employees at America's second-largest phone group are being promised extra pay. Many of them fear that upstart WorldCom and Bernie Ebbers, its abrasive chief executive, will be difficult to work with. More than \$400 million has already been set aside in a bonus pool.

At the same time, MCI is cutting its workforce. Just before Christmas it announced 1,500 job losses out of a total of 55,000. Many of the redundancies were in contract work areas. Analysts said they detected the work of management consultants who were keen to cut support staff to boost profits.

Cable & Wireless already operates a mobile telephone service, which launched in April with local partners Singapore Press Holdings and Keppel Holdings. The company, which has a strong presence in the Asian region, is bidding for the new fixed licence with the same partners. WorldCom has two local partners in its consortium — SemeCorp and Singapore MRT.

Bids have to be in by tomorrow and the winner should be known by March. Apart from offering competition to Singapore Telecom, the bidders will be competing on multimedia offerings and their ability to give Singapore a communications edge in the next century.

Three-way battle for Singapore phone deal

BY RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

A THREE-WAY battle for a new telephone licence in Singapore got under way yesterday when Starhub Consortium, a grouping that includes BT, submitted its formal application.

The contest pits BT against Cable & Wireless and WorldCom, the US telecommunications group, which outbid BT for MCI this year. Two telephone licences are on offer from the Telecommunications Authority of Singapore for the new public basic service and a cellular mobile service.

BT is applying for both licences with its partners, Singapore Technologies, Singapore Power and Nippon Telephone and Telegraph of Japan. Ho Ching, president of Singapore Technologies, said the consortium is bidding for both licences because we see a future where fixed and mobile services are seamlessly integrated".

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Bupa buys on-site healthcare firm

BY MARIANNE CURPHAY

BUPA, the UK's largest healthcare provider, has paid £5 million for Occupational Healthcare (Railways), a company based in Staffordshire specialising in medical services in the workplace.

The deal comes just days after Bupa won control of Care First, the nursing home operator, with an increased bid of £273 million for it. Bupa, of

which Peter Jacobs is chief executive, is the market leader in medical insurance and is a dominant player in hospital provision and nursing homes.

Occupational Healthcare, which employs 80 people and has ten centres around the country, is run by Stuart Vere, the former general manager of the screening centres run by Private Patients Plan (now PPF healthcare). Occupational Healthcare was originally part of British Rail, but was broken off via a management buyout two years ago. Since then, it has gained other clients as well as retaining the railway business. It is the second-largest company in its market and provides on-site care and advises on health and safety compliance issues.

Bupa said: "This acquisition substantially increases our presence in the occupational healthcare market. It is part of our strategy to build up a range of healthcare services for our business clients."

Jacobs: £5 million deal

It is understood that Bupa will use the deal to expand its on-site healthcare services.

Occupational Healthcare has 100 staff and 10 centres.

STOCKMARKET

Stock Market Writer
of the Year

Index in festive spirit but turnover is exaggerated

INVESTORS yesterday enjoyed some of the seasonal festivity that has been lacking of late.

A near 100-point leap in the FTSE 100 index as more than 500 million shares changed hands is the stuff classic bull markets are made of. But just like the traditional pantomime, closer inspection reveals not everything is as it should be.

True, the index managed to close at its best of the day, of therabouts, sporting a gain of 98.5 at 5,124. But the turnover level of 512 million shares was exaggerated by the pre-arranged buyback of British Gas "B" shares — all 237 million of them. BG closed a further 4.5p dearer at 281p.

Add to this a put-through in five million British Steel shares at 128.5p — their closing price, up 2p — and the overall picture starts to look a little different with genuine turnover amounting to only 270 million shares. Much of yesterday's early pace was futures-led, sprinkled with the usual batch of new year share recommendations and take-over tips.

Nevertheless, the absence of sellers yesterday and the opening 100-point plus rise on Wall Street means that brokers remain upbeat about prospects for the remainder of the year. They are talking it up to the 5,200 level by the year end.

Stock shortages provided double-digit rises among leading shares with Siebe the best performer among the top 100 with a leap of 80p, or 7.2 per cent, at £11.0. The buyers also came in for Unilever, up 25p to 510p, Marks & Spencer, 29p better at 610p, Rentokil Initial, 13p to 267p, Tesco, 23p to 507p, and Carlton Communications, 20p to 470p.

There was further demand for the financials as the speculators tried to select the likely bid candidates for 1998. Top of the list is Guardian Royal Exchange, up 17p at 332p, followed by Abbey National, 39p better at £11.09, Northern Rock, 8p dearer at 588.5p, Sun Life, 29p higher at 445p, Norwich Union, 10p stronger at 390p, and Bank of Scotland, 20p dearer at 570p. Lloyds TSB, a likely predator, rose 22p at 770p.

Southern Electric, 11p better at 52p, continues to be viewed as a takeover target. A previous stamp by one of the power generators a few years



Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy saw Kingfisher increase 7p to 839p

back was blocked by the Government.

Kingfisher, whose chief executive is Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, rose 7p to 839p on plans to create a further 1,500 jobs by opening six more B&Q Warehouse stores.

Enviroined touched 9p before ending the session 2p firmer at 82p after confirming it had been in takeover talks during the past six months.

The healthcare specialist said talks had now ended but it could not rule out the possibility of more approaches.

Another company in bid talks is Independent Parts, up 20p at 134.5p. The automotive parts specialist says any bid is likely to be priced at around 140p, giving the group a price tag of £33.4 million.

Matthew Clark, the drinks distributor, continued to feel

the ill-effects of its recent profits warning with the price hitting a new low of 157p before rallying to reduce the fall to just 3p at 163.5p. Rival Merrydowns, which sweetened its profits warning with news of a bid approach this month, was steady at 51.5p.

Last week's profits warning continued to weigh heavily with ILP Group, up lighter at 31.5p. The packaging group has seen its price fall from a peak of 78p to 51p.

Abacis Recruitment, the best-performing share of 1997, continued to leave the rest of the market in its wake with a leap of 67p to a new peak of 522.5p. The price has come up from a low of 84.5p this year.

By contrast, the worst-performing share of the year was BKG Resources, which slipped 1p to a new low of 104p. That compares with its peak for the year of 237p.

Biocompatibles celebrated European regulatory approval for its coronary treatment with a jump of 3p to 45p.

There was some return to normality at Danus Business Systems as the price rallied 8p to 230p after briefly touching 247.5p.

Brokers say Sparge Consultants, the software specialist and servicing group, may be worth looking at in the new year. The price closed unchanged at 147.5p, way below its peak of 174.5p. The group should enjoy a boom on the back of the "millennium bug". Sparge made £1.2 million last year with £1.4 million expected this time round.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** Revived fears that interest rates could rise by a further half-point to 7.75 per cent in the new year took some of the burnish off the recent strong performance by the bond market.

The experts are claiming that the Bank of England may move again if post-Christmas sales in the shops prove stronger than expected.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt finished £1.6 lower at 112.2 in thin trading in longs. Treasury 8 per cent 2021 firmed a tick to 112.25, while among short-dated issues Treasury 7 per cent 2002 eased a tick to 110.21.

□ **NEW YORK:** Shares held sharp, early gains amid lessening investor jitters over South Korea's financial troubles. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 107.12 points to 7,786.43 at midday.

FRIDAY sees the creation of a new sector within the FT All-share index. The information and technology sector will cater for the high-tech companies that have mushroomed in recent years. Calculation of the new sector starts on Friday.

A number of companies have already begun enjoying something of a rerating and others were being chased higher by buyers yesterday as the institutions set about the task of adjusting their weightings.

Logica led the way with a

rise of 17.5p to £10.90.

having already attracted "buy" recommendations from several leading brokers. Nomura, the Japanese securities house, has set a target price of 115 and its rival, SBC Warburg Dillon Reed, says the shares are a buy up to £12.80. Others to go better included London Bridge Securities, 23p to 514.5p, MMT Computing, 30p to 840p, Micro Focus, 15p to £23.40, Maxis, 22.5p to £17.95, Royalblue, up to 315p, Sherwood International, 20p to 485p, Cadcentre, 20p to 325p, and Diagonal, 22.5p to 680p.

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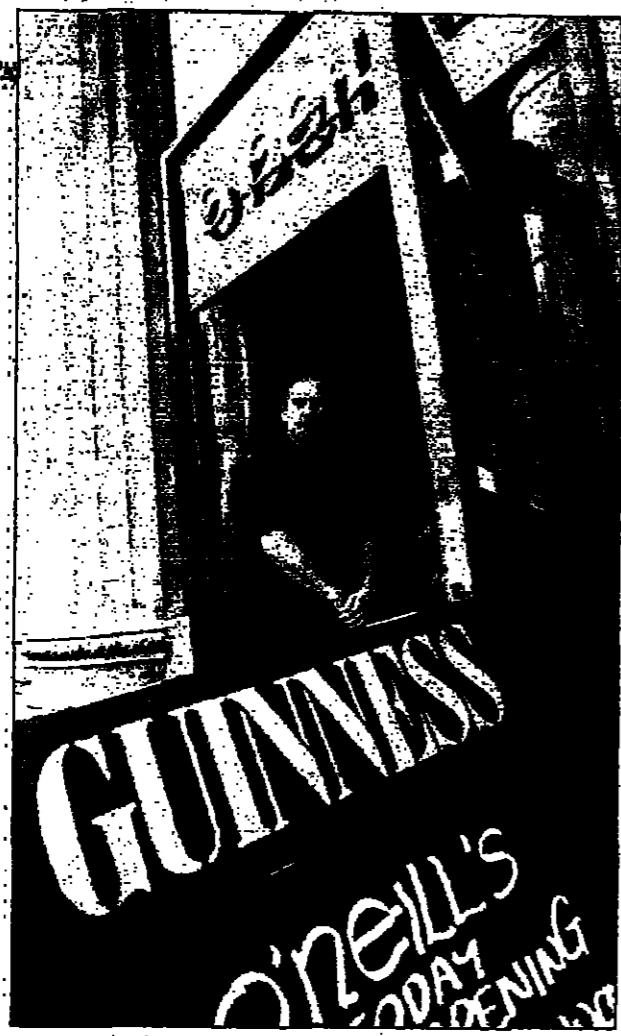
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FRIDAY sees



Pub parade: an O'Neill's outlet, left; Richard Pennycock, Tim Martin, John Hutson of JD Wetherspoon, top; Guy Hands of Nomura, below left; lager boom; and entrepreneur Roger Myers



Dog & Duck heads for oblivion in an era of branded beer outlets

Dominic Walsh and Andrew Sangster on the entrepreneurs who are at the forefront of a £1.2bn pub retailing revolution

The pub industry is undergoing a dramatic transformation. On current industry estimates, next year the big operators will pour £1.5 billion into the pubs they run as they rush to exploit the returns available from converting traditional outlets into branded concepts.

The most visible of these new-look pubs have been the much-maligned ersatz Irish pubs. With the wave of a shamrock, the Dog and Duck is transformed into an O'Neill's, a Scruffy Murphy's or one of the myriad other copy-cat concepts. Bass has become the biggest Irish operator with its O'Neill's, rolled out in conjunction with its Caffrey's Irish beer, one of the most successful beer launches in recent years.

Next year's country of choice looks set to be Australia, with such monikers as Bar Oz due for wider exposure. Scottish & Newcastle, which is behind the Bar Oz concept, is hoping to tap into the resurgence of interest in the southern hemisphere expected to follow from the staging of the Olympics in Sydney in 2000. S&N is also hoping the spread of Australian pub brands will do for Foster's, the Australian beer it brews under licence, what Irish pubs have done for Caffrey's.

The interest in managed pubs is a by-product of the retailing revolution that has swept through the country's 70,000-plus licensed outlets. At the end of the last decade most brewers viewed pubs as just an outlet for beer. Pubs were seen in the boardrooms as a necessary evil in the more important game of shifting as many barrels as possible.

Today, however, all the big brewers have divided their operations into production and retailing divisions. Indeed some, such as Greene's, have opted out of brewing altogether, and there have been persistent whispers that Whitbread may follow suit.

It is widely held that this transformation was caused by government intervention. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission report into the supply of beer in 1989 condemned the vertical integration in the industry, whereby most brewers also owned the outlets for their beer.

Lord Young of Graffham, then Secretary of State at the Department of Trade and Industry, acted on the MMC's findings by forcing the big brewers to free half of all their pubs above a 2,000 ceiling from the tie under which landlords were obliged to sell beer supplied by the parent.

Effectively, the brewers were forced to shed thousands of pubs in response to the Beer Orders from the DTI.

A raft of new companies sprang up to run the pubs that were being unloaded. These new kids on the block took a fresh look at the industry and, with no brewery to keep happy, launched into pub retailing. Several, such as Regent Inns and Grosvenor Inns, have subsequently floated on the stock market and have tended to command pretty healthy multiples.

But Tim Martin, the founder of JD Wetherspoon, one of the most successful pub chains, disputes this view of things. "The MMC was not the catalyst for change. What really mattered was that people were able to get new licences," he claims.

He has a point. Wetherspoon, except at the outset in the early 1990s, has never bought an existing pub, preferring to convert old car showrooms and schools into superpubs. "We started opening new pubs, which forced the industry to reinvent," says Martin. "All the MMC did

was reduce the number of big brewers from six to three."

In effect, the driver for change has been an increasing understanding of who is going to pub and what they want. The shrinking manual workforce of thirsty blue-collar males has seen beer volumes shrink dramatically during the 1990s, with the emphasis moving from ales to lagers.

A new market was needed and so the industry turned its attention to women and families, with food rather than beer becoming the focus for most of the new pubs. At Wetherspoon about a third of the takings in its new outlets are food. In 1990, just 4 per cent of the chain's turnover was food.

Many of the brewers realised that the new climate required skills they did not possess. Bass, for example, turned in 1994 to outside

consultant Amanda Wilmott to help develop the All Bar One concept, which looks nothing like a conventional pub.

They are light, airy venues where the emphasis is on food and wine. These so-called female-friendly characteristics are designed to make the pubs accessible to everybody. The reality, admits Wilmott, is more prosaic. The city centre All Bar One units are most likely to be filled with male suits. "We tapped into a huge demand, which was always there: a group of people with a high disposable income much more concerned about standards," she explains.

The next generation of pubgoers will be even more demanding, she believes, as they have grown up in an environment where eating out has become the norm rather than the exception. Whether male

or female, the future customer will not accept the smoky, claustrophobic atmosphere of a traditional boozer.

Her latest venture is with Yates Brothers Wine Lodges, a century-old company that has transformed itself into one of the managed pub pioneers. Yates, under Wilmott's supervision, will open the first Ha! Ha! Bar & Canteen in Bristol in February, which will be followed later in the year by two sites in London. Open-plan kitchens visible to the customer, plus the sale of a range of own-branded goods such as mustards and oils, will be the key features of the new chain.

"The industry has a lot to learn. We are still building pubs without air-conditioning and yet every car my friends buy has air-conditioning," she says.

While the revolution in pubs is arguably good news for consumer choice, investors will be looking harder at whether an adequate return can be made on the money being ploughed in. To date the returns have been good, on the whole, with the best operators achieving at least 20 to 25 per cent. Bass estimates that its return on capital from converting an unbranded pub to an O'Neill's is more than 50 per cent on average.

But as more and more of the big companies' managed estates are converted to brands there is clearly the prospect of diminishing returns, and Whitbread is the most likely to suffer first. It has led the charge into pub retailing and more than half of its managed pubs are branded, a higher proportion than any of the other big players. Bass and S&N, on the other hand, are likely to benefit from being laggards in the rush to brand-



Lord Young's response forced big brewers to shed pubs

curious how few City folk have bothered to come into work this week, is it not? In any event clearance by Imro, the financial regulator, of the SocGen team is just days away.

Yesterday the signing of two more fund managers was announced. John Ions will be head of retail and Mikkel Bates in charge of unit trust services. Both, oddly enough, were poached from Aberdeen Prolific. Ions having been in charge of integrating the two businesses of Aberdeen Asset Management and Prolific since the merger was announced in July. They bring the number of fund managers to 11. I am told there will be more before the official launch on January 20.

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Gloves off

In a few days' time, assuming they have been playing by the rules, the team now gathered around Nicola Horlick and John Richards at Société Générale Asset Management will be allowed to pick up the phone and start poaching former clients. Mergers and job losses, the Asian flu, and now a new and soundly backed fund manager snapping at their heels —



Nicola Horlick awaits the regulator

The time for navel-gazing is truly over

I have been a year most marketers would rather forget. After endless conferences and seminars debating the role of marketing in the industry arrived at the most unsatisfactory conclusion: marketing is the understanding of the customers' needs. Not much change there. I hear you say. For an industry that prides itself on the ability to read its customers' minds it is singularly inept at self-analysis.

However, after years of getting bashed about in the boardroom the industry decided to take a good look in the mirror to see if it was in healthy enough shape to take on the challenges that lie ahead.

And, now that marketers understand who they are and what they are meant to be doing they are determined to ensure 1998 is the year in which they finally convince their paymasters of their true value. And, given the very nature of their job, marketers should be the most adept at promoting their own cause.

John Stubbs, chief executive of The Marketing Council, the industry think-tank, says the time has come for marketers to call a halt to the navel-gazing and start proving their worth.

Most marketers are sitting inside their marketing departments worrying about the acceptability of marketing," he says. "What

never those who contribute to the bottom line."

But he adds: "In order to gain their confidence we have to learn how to present our ideas to the board and back them up with numbers. Without that we don't have a great deal of credibility."

Yet, while marketers ponder their role, the business world around is changing at such a rapid pace that marketers are finding it harder to predict what their customers want and therefore plan ahead.

Aside from the usual suspects that appear on every marketers' worry list — media inflation, restrictive legislation, cost control — there are signs that a more perturbing trend is emerging: a genuine lack of control.

Bob Sinclair, marketing director of the Automobile Association, speaks for the majority of service-driven companies tempted by the attractions of diversification into new areas when he says: "There are so many distractions. We're trying to figure out ways in which we can retain the true loyalty of our customers. Do we do that by diversifying into new areas or do we stick to what we have always done before but only try to do it better. There is a danger of diversification just for the sake of it."

For Paul Wood, managing director of Spode, the bone china manufacturer, it is the ever-changing taste of the consumer that is forcing his company to move away from a mass-produced product to individual lines. Trying to predict

what consumers want and therefore what his retail customer will be demanding is becoming increasingly difficult. He says: "You have to latch on to the trends very fast. If you don't, you could be marketing at the wrong time."

Stephen Robertson, chairman of the Marketing Society and marketing director at BAA, the DIY chain, says: "Marketing is becoming more important; it's become a process; it's no longer just a name about the door."

"However, we've got to make sure that the whole of the business understands what the customer is thinking. It's about informing the business and not just the marketing department."

It is a familiar theme to marketing departments in a variety of business sectors. Not least in the world of computers and business systems.

Keith Westcott, group marketing director at ICL, came to the United Kingdom after working in marketing in America. He says UK companies, including his own, still regard marketing with suspicion.

"For a long time marketing has been a dirty word," he laments. "The board sees marketing as the people who only spend money and never have foreseen."

JULIAN LEE

BUSINESS LETTERS

Chancellor and national insurance

From Mr David Lindsay
Sir, Gordon Brown is right not to rule out increasing national insurance contributions. "Brown stirs up talk of increase in national insurance", *Weekend Money*, December 20. It is not a tax, but a contribution out of earnings to a fund from which contributory benefits, such as the state pension, are paid. There is currently a top limit of annual earnings that bear this contribution, and clearly no Chancellor would have invented a "tax" solely for earned income and then only on a lower band of that income!

Obviously Mr Brown wants to keep open the possibility of improving contributory bene-

fits. My guess is that he and Mrs Harman want to reform the basic state pension, making it fairer between men and women with the same NI record, and with payment starting within a range of ages that reflects actual retirement practice (as Beveridge intended), not five or more years after most people have retired.

Abolition of the upper earnings limit would enable a very substantial start to be made in reducing male state pension age for the basic pension.

Yours faithfully,

DAVID LINDSAY,
36 Orchard Combe,
Whitchurch Hill,
Reading, Berkshire.

price of oil, trade unions, draft EU decisions, kids in red braces not knowing their aperitif from their elbow, shareholders, and so on?

It will not do for chief executives to admit publicly that they got it wrong. Mr St Quinton deserves to get thrown out of the club.

Yours unbelievably,
ROY JENKINSON,
22 Grange Avenue,
Exmouth, Devon.

Ritz cracker

A TRICKY problem for Mohamed Al Fayed, 1998 is the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Ritz Hotel in Paris by Carl Ritz. His mission was to offer guests all the refinements a prince would wish for in his own residence. The centenary would normally lead itself to an ostentatious publicity campaign — except that the Paris Ritz, following the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, has had enough publicity for a while, some might think. The inquiries should be over by the late spring, so unleashing the inevitable legal actions. Boasting over the

comforts and splendid service on offer at the hotel might clash with some of the headlines this summer.

Alas, however busy it may be on the trading floor at Harrods, most of the rest of Al Fayed's organisation seems to have come down with the same mystery virus that has flooded 98 per cent of the working population this week. "We won't be making any comment until Monday," says one of the few survivors.

I HEAR that George Robertson, our tough-minded Scottish Defence Secretary, received a memo from one of his civil servants explaining the trading floor arrangements for the red box this year, the pile of documents that ministers have to take home to work on. The red box would be arriving on December 31, and its contents would need to be processed by January 2. The civil servant in question was swiftly put straight as to Robertson's own holiday arrangements this

Bank error
ANY expert on advertising, if that is not an oxymoron, will tell you that "knocking copy", ads that attack the competition, can rebound badly — look at the bloody battle a few years



ago between rival lawnmowers makers. But the latest TV campaign from First Direct starting on New Year's Day looks suspiciously close to knocking copy, featuring Bob Morley, a comedian, attempting to make people pay for things they would normally do for free, such as wear a side-parting in their hair.

No, I didn't think it sounded very funny, either. But it is a direct attack on all those banks that charge for their services, and to make sure I do not miss the point, First Direct has spent just how much most of them charge. Oddly enough, the only ones offering a free service are First Direct and Midland, which happens to be First Direct's parent. Can we look forward, therefore, to an all-out advertising war between the banks? "My

curious how few City folk have bothered to come into work this week, is it not? In any event clearance by Imro, the financial regulator, of the SocGen team is just days away.

Yesterday the signing of two more fund managers was announced. John Ions will be head of retail and Mikkel Bates in charge of unit trust services.

Both, oddly enough, were poached from Aberdeen Prolific. Ions having been in charge of integrating the two businesses of Aberdeen Asset Management and Prolific since the merger was announced in July. They bring the number of fund managers to 11. I am told there will be more before the official launch on January 20.

MARTIN WALLER

Gloves off

In a few days' time, assuming they have been playing by the rules, the team now gathered around Nicola Horlick and John Richards at Société Générale Asset Management will be allowed to pick up the phone and start poaching former clients. Mergers and job losses, the Asian flu, and now a new and soundly backed fund manager snapping at their heels —



Nicola Horlick awaits the regulator

Guide to the best and worst ITF players . . .

So you thought you had done badly in ITF? Cheer yourself up with this Nightmare Team of the season

Hoping for some seasonal peace, love and understanding from those mentioned, we have selected the opposite of a Dream Team — the Nightmare XII: the players and manager who, put together in one sorry squad, would guarantee you the wooden spoon at the bottom of the entire Interactive Team Football league.

Not, you understand, that these are downright bad players. Although, in the interests of some degree of fairness, we have not selected injured players who have missed the entire season so far (Alan Shearer being the obvious example) some have, admittedly, played only a few games and have, consequently, accrued only a



and has been invisible since Ron Atkinson took over.

Other players have played consistently but in struggling teams, where fine individual performances have been lost in the general confusion.

NIGHTMARE XII	
Goalkeeper	
D Watson (Barnsley)	-24
Full backs	
P Blondeau (Sheff Wed)	-15
J Edinburgh (Spurs)	-9
Central defenders	
A McNamea (Aston Villa)	-19
B O'Neill (Aberdeen)	-17
Midfielders	
S Hughes (Arsenal)	3
M Johansen (Bolton)	6
R Storer (Southampton)	6
J Oates (Everton)	0
Strikers	
J Dominguez (Spurs)	0
H Kewell (Leeds)	2
Manager	0
J Duffy (Hibernian)	0
■ ITF helpline: 01582 702720	

Defenders and goalkeepers hold a distinct advantage over midfield players and forwards in this type of exercise, in that they are able to score large numbers of minus points with relative ease. Short of missing a penalty, scoring an own goal and receiving a red card in the same game several times a season, the average forward would have trouble achieving an overall minus. Not that some have not tried.

Predictably, Barnsley and Hibernian, the two teams at the bottom of the two premier leagues, are represented, although the weighting in favour of the Yorkshire club is slightly artificial in that more Barnsley players are listed. Keen-eyed observers of the ITF player lists have already commented that both Hibernian and the team they recently replaced at the bottom of the Scottish premier league, Aberdeen, have done miraculously well considering that they appear to have no full backs and only two central defenders between them.

Where two candidates are equal in terms of their points total, the player who has proved to be a bigger waste of your money has been chosen. The rules about not selecting more than two representatives from one club have been scrupulously observed in the interests of fairness. To



Clockwise from top left: Watson (24), Blondeau (15), Slater (6), Dominguez (0)



Clockwise from top left: Slater (6), Dominguez (0), Watson (24), Blondeau (15)

ADD	
52804 Jürgen Klinsmann	Tottenham Hotspur
HOW TO MAKE A TRANSFER	
□ YOU MAY transfer as and when you wish according to your team transfer allowance. If a player or manager moves teams during the season, it may affect the composition of your team. You may adjust your team by using the transfer system to avoid missing out on points.	
□ EACH TEAM that was entered at the start of the season was allocated 60 transfers for the season and each team registering after that date had its number of transfers reduced by three per week up to December 13. Teams registered before noon that day were allocated an extra 20 transfers. Teams registered since then and from now on will be allocated 20 transfers for the rest of the season.	
□ THE LINE is open now and will remain open for the rest of the season. You may only make transfers by using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone). You will need ten digits for your PIN, which you will have to tap in (not speak). Follow the simple instructions and tap in the five-digit codes of the players that you are transferring.	
□ YOU MAY make up to four transfers per call but may make as many calls as you wish to achieve the required amount of transfers.	
□ TRANSFERS made before 12 noon on any day will become effective for matches starting after that time. Transfers made after 12 noon will become effective for matches starting after 12 noon the following day.	
□ YOUR NEW player only starts to score points for you when his transfer is registered. The current score of the player transferred out remains part of your team score but he then ceases to score for you.	
□ CALLS COST 50p per minute and calls from a telephone box cost approximately twice as much.	
Transfer number: 0891-884 628. Outside the UK: +44 990 200 538.	

4 Transfer number: 0891-884 628. Outside the UK: +44 990 200 538.

4 Transfer number: 0891-884 628. Outside the UK: +44 990 200 538.

GOALKEEPERS			
Code	Name	Team	Cost (£m)
10101 J Leighton	Aberdeen	2.00	8
10201 D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	5
10301 M Bosnich	Aston Villa	3.00	5
10401 D Watson	Barnsley	1.00	10
10501 T Flowers	Blackburn R	3.50	-3
10601 K Branagan	Bolton W	1.50	0
10701 S Kerr	Celtic	4.00	0
10702 J Gould	Celtic	3.50	2
10801 E De Goey	Chelsea	3.00	2
10901 S Ogrizovic	Coventry City	1.50	0
11001 C Nash	Crystal Palace	0.25	0
11002 K Miller	Crystal Palace	2.00	-1
11101 M Poore	Derby County	1.50	10
11201 S Dykstra	Dundee United	2.00	-9
11301 I Westwater	Dunfermline	1.00	-3
11401 N Southall	Everton	2.00	0
11501 G Rousset	Hearts	3.50	3
11601 C Reid	Hibernian	1.50	2
11602 O Gottskalksson	Hibernian	1.50	0
11701 D Lekovic	Kilmarnock	1.00	8
11801 N Martyn	Leeds United	3.50	0
11901 K Keller	Leicester City	3.00	-1
12001 D James	Liverpool	3.50	6
12101 P Schmeichel	Manchester Utd	5.00	0
12201 S Howie	Motherwell	1.00	0
12301 S Given	Newcastle Utd	3.00	0
12401 A Goram	Rangers	5.00	0
12501 K Pressman	Sheffield Wed	2.00	9
12702 P Jones	Southampton	1.00	3
12801 A Main	St Johnstone	0.50	8
12801 I Walker	Tottenham H	2.50	-5
12901 L Mirkosko	West Ham United	2.00	0
13001 N Sullivan	Wimbledon	2.50	-1

Code	Name	Team	Cost (£m)	Week Total
30101 B O'Neill	Aberdeen	2.00	5	-17
30201 T Adams	Arsenal	3.00	0	13
30202 M Keown	Arsenal	3.00	0	2
30203 G Grindam	Arsenal	2.00	0	14
30204 S Bould	Arsenal	3.00	0	11
30301 G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.00	0	11
30302 U Ehiogu	Aston Villa	3.00	0	23
30401 A De Zeeuw	Barnsley	1.00	4	-16
30402 A Masa	Barnsley	0.50	4	-19
30403 M Appleby	Barnsley	0.50	0	-8
30502 C Hendry	Blackburn R	3.00	4	32
30504 S Hanchaz	Blackburn R	2.50	3	24
30505 T Pedersen	Blackburn R	2.00	0	2
30601 G Taggart	Bolton W	1.50	0	5
30602 G Bergesson	Bolton W	1.00	4	16
30603 C Farrelough	Bolton W	1.00	-2	-5
30604 M Fish	Bolton W	1.50	-2	11
30701 E Annan	Celtic	1.50	0	12
30702 M MacKay	Celtic	3.00	0	2
30703 A Stubbs	Celtic	3.00	-1	43
30704 M Riener	Celtic	3.00	0	29
30801 F Leboeuf	Chelsea	3.00	0	39
30802 M Duberry	Chelsea	3.00	0	24
30803 S Clarke	Chelsea	2.50	0	14
30804 B Lambourde	Chelsea	2.50	0	-1
30901 L Dash	Coventry City	1.50	0	0
30902 R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50	0	13
30903 P Williams	Coventry City	1.50	0	-5
31001 A Roberts	Crystal Palace	1.50	-1	14
31002 A Lightrain	Crystal Palace	0.75	-2	8
31003 D Tuttie	Crystal Palace	0.75	0	44
31004 G Hiddink	Crystal Palace	1.00	-1	0
31005 R McNamea	Derby County	2.50	5	18
31006 I Reddick	Derby County	1.50	2	14
31007 J Parkinson	Derby County	1.50	0	14
31008 D Farrelly	Derby County	1.50	2	14
31009 D Williamson	Derby County	2.00	0	19
31010 J Oates	Derby County	2.50	3	44
31011 N McCann	Hearts	3.50	0	48
31012 C Jackson	Hibernian	2.00	0	6
31013 B Lawry	Hibernian	2.00	0	20
31014 J McIntyre	Kilmarnock	2.00	0	0
31015 G Seale	Leeds United	4.00	0	49
31016 P Gossage	Leeds United	3.00	0	17
31017 R Bowyer	Leeds United	2.00	0	33
31018 A Headland	Leeds United	2.50	0	26
31019 L Sharpe	Leeds United	2.50	0	22
31020 B Ribeiro	Leicester City	2.00	1	11
31021 G Parker	Leicester City	2.00	5	35
31022 N Lennon	Leicester City	2.00	2	38
31023 M Izett	Leicester City	1.50	0	10
31024 S Taylor	Liverpool	6.00	10	82
31025 O Leonhardt	Liverpool	3.00	4	30
31026 M Thomas	Liverpool	3.00	0	14
31027 P Ince	Liverpool	4.00	4	25
31028 D Beckham	Manchester Utd	8.00	2	52
31029 J Parkinson	Manchester Utd	7.00	1	47
31030 R Keane	Manchester Utd	5.00	0	23
31031 D Hopkin	Leeds Utd	3.50	1	28
31032 P Gossage	Leeds Utd	6.00	0	24
31033 J Them	Rangers	3.00	0	16
31034 G Albertz	Rangers	4.00	2	33
31035 B Carbone	Sheffield Wed	3.00	2	35
31036 J Magilton	Sheffield Wed	2.0		

... and lessons to learn for the New Year

THE TIMES ITF

Have a good Christmas? No thanks, I've already had one. Too good, as a matter of fact. Ah, that accounts for the aspirin and the itchy eyes. You should see them from this side, mate. What did Santa bring you, then, apart from the obvious excess of alcoholic beverages? Quite a few points in Interactive Team Football. I'm running nicely into form for the beginning of the FA Cup league.

So have you checked your position in the list? Not yet, it's too depressing. Whenever I ring the information line, I've gone down a few hundred places, which can't be right when I've scored all those points. Well, there are hundreds of thousands of other people playing apart from you, you know. But surely the ones in the six-figure positions can't be doing that well, or they wouldn't be down there with me. A few points more or less can mean a difference of thousands of places. Who were your big Christmas successes? Well, Steve Walsh scored from thirty yards at Highbury. pity it was at the wrong end. Eh? I missed that: I must have been out of it on Boxing Day.

Who else? I think my man Baiano of Derby scored from a penalty against someone... It was Erano, actually. Oh, was it? Maybe I didn't do that well after all. I probably had steady rather than spectacular scores. At least now we can look forward to the FA Cup. Who did you pick up front in your cup team? It had to be Harrison. If he can score against Premier League teams, he can score against Emley. I also took the controversial step of acquiring some Crystal Palace defenders.

What on earth for? Tactics, comrade, tactics. I'm sure they won't win at home to Scunthorpe, but I fancy a draw in that one, so I'll get an extra appearance out of each of them in the replay. Goodness me. Anyone would think you've been reading the editorial on these pages and not just looking at the pictures. Any new year resolutions, by the way? Just one. Which is?

Stop listening to your advice.

Exactly what I would have suggested.

More jumpers for Christmas; the FA Cup league starting this week; and a PFA team with only one direction to go in 1998 — up

The two full FA Carling Premiership programmes over the weekend have, as expected, enabled some ITF entrants to make spectacular rises up the lists. Pride of whose team, Hope United, earned 65 points enough to take him up to 80,768th place from the relative depths of 126,787th. Hot on his heels was Mr A. Friar; his selection, Convincethinme, moved from 123,654th to 92,315th — a jump of 41,339 places.

■ Don't forget — the FA Cup League begins on Saturday. Enter your team now!

■ One of the secrets of success for ITF team managers is careful husbandry of the £35 transfer budget.

An over-cautious approach can, however, be taken too far. The Scrooge-like parsimony of Mike Whitlow, the Bolton Wanderers full-back, has resulted in his team, The No-Chancers, living up (or down) to their name: they are 59 points adrift at the foot of the PFA mini-league table. Short of selecting Bob Cratchit at left-back and Tiny Tim in midfield, it is hard to see how the selection could less accurately reflect the big-spending spirit of Christmas Present.

The current value of Whitlow's team is only £17 million — less than half of the available starting kitty. Instead of splashing out on a Marco



What did Mike Whitlow get for Christmas? Perhaps Santa brought him eleven new players for The No-Chancers

Negri, buying Iain Dowie seems an eccentric move. And to select one Barnsley defender may be regarded as a misfortune — to select two looks like carelessness. Adrian Moses, one of his central defenders, even managed to spoil one of

HOW IS YOUR TEAM DOING?

Call the ITF Checkline on

0891 884 643

50p a minute, using a Touch-tone telephone. Public calls cost twice as much

his better days, the 1-0 win over Derby County on Sunday, with a booking. Nor have Dylan Kerr and John Hughes, the rest of his back four, covered themselves in festive glory.

Ironically, one of his cheapest acquisitions, Alan Main, the St Johnstone goalkeeper, has been one of his greatest successes, but it is the exception that proves the rule. Speculate to accumulate is clearly the message.

■ December prize-winners will be announced a fortnight today.

FAXBACK YOUR UP-TO-DATE TEAM SCORES

The brand new Times Faxback service provides you with a complete results sheet of your team, showing current and total scores, dates, times and details of transfers, as well as your position in the ITF League and, if appropriate, your mini-league (womens, students, youth). Scores and transfer confirmations are updated by 12 noon on the day following a match or matches.

Make sure you have your ten-digit PIN number ready when you call. To obtain an ITF Team Faxback, simply pick up the handset of the fax machine and dial the telephone number below. If your fax does not have a handset, attach a handset or press the on-hook or telephone button instead and dial the number below. Listen carefully to the instructions and press the appropriate buttons when asked. Calls cost £1 per minute and are available in the UK only.

The number to call for your Faxback is:

0991 111 333

If you have any problems operating this service, call the Faxback Helpline on 0171-412 3795. This service is provided by Telecom Express, Westminster Tower, London SE1 7SP.

HOW THE SCORING SYSTEM WORKS																																
All 1997-8 matches in the FA Carling Premiership, FA Cup, Belf's Scottish League premier division and Tennents Scottish Cup count for points. Penalty shoutouts do not count for managers.																																
decided in this way will count for managers.																																
POINTS AWARDED																																
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Goalkeeper</td> <td>Strikers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Keeps clean sheet (per half)*</td> <td>Scored goal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Scored goal</td> <td>+2 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Saves penalty</td> <td>All players</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>+1 point</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>On winning side</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>+1 point</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>Appearance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>Scoring net-trick</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>+10 bonus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>Wins</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>+3 points</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>Draws</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+</td> <td>+1 point</td> </tr> </table>			Goalkeeper	Strikers	Keeps clean sheet (per half)*	Scored goal	Scored goal	+2 points	Saves penalty	All players	+	+1 point	+	On winning side	+	+1 point	+	Appearance	+	Scoring net-trick	+	+10 bonus	+	Manager	+	Wins	+	+3 points	+	Draws	+	+1 point
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+	Manager																															
+	Team loses																															
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* Must have played a complete half in the match to earn +3 points * Must have played for 75 minutes in the match + Must have played for 45 minutes in the match																																

£1,000, a signed Mitre football and a Mitre Sports bag, and tickets to a premier league match of your choice can be won every month, plus the chance to win £10,000 in a separate FA Cup League so enter the ITF now.

The manager of the month can be won by any team, no matter where it is in the overall ITF league. The prize simply goes to the person whose team scores the highest points in any one month. If you are a student or a woman (18 or over) you may also enter the appropriate mini-league, while under-18 year olds enter the Youth league. These all carry separate monthly prizes.

By entering the ITF, your team will automatically be entered into a separate FA Cup league. Your players will earn you points for the FA Cup league (Littewood's FA Cup and Tennents Scottish FA Cup) as well as the main ITF league.

Remember the earlier you register, the more transfers your team will be allocated.

HOW TO ENTER

Entries to ITF via The Times are now by phone only, on

0891 405 011

From the Republic of Ireland only +44 990 100 308

- You must use a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone).
- Choose 1 goalkeeper, 2 full backs, 2 central defenders, 4 midfielders, 2 strikers and a manager.
- Do not spend more than 35 million.
- Do not choose more than two individuals (2 players or 1 player and 1 manager) from any one club.
- Once you have chosen your team, call the entry line, above, and follow the step-by-step instructions.
- You will be given a ten-digit personal identification number (PIN) at the end of the call. You must keep a note of this number as you will need your PIN for making transfers and checking your team score.

A new team will score points on future games. 0891 calls cost 50p per minute. Your call will cost about double if made from a pay phone. In the event of there being more than one league winner, a tiebreak will operate.

ITF LEAGUE	
1 Mr M Jones	77
2 D Fenton	704
3 Mr M Jones	696
4 S J Lister	691
5 Mike Madden	687
6 Malcolm Jackson	676
7 D Shutes	675
8 Mr M Jones	675
9 B Faizalzadeh	669
10 Mr M Kennedy	661
11 G Rainbow	660
12 P Turner	658
13 A Luckhurst	657
14 N Wheately	655
15 M Colombe	654
16 Al Hastings	653
17 D Smiters	652
18 A Luckhurst	651
19 G Rainbow	650
20 P Rawlings	649
21 Mr D Edsrook Steiner	648
22 A Nevaski	647
23 Mr Ann Kennedy	646
24 C Mowat	645
25 P Rees	645
26 Diboush	645
27 J Strickland	645
28 G Dakin	645
29 P Turner	645
30 Mr M Jones	645
31 Mr M Kennedy	645
32 G Dakin	645
33 P Turner	645
34 G Wilson	645
35 Mr M Jones	645
36 B Barr	645
37 J Hunt	645
38 S Legg	645
39 P Turner	645
40 D Shutes	645
41 A Luckhurst	645
42 A Lynn	645
43 P Turner	645
44 Barba Pappa a Bacon	645
45 Chris Roche	645
46 Mr M Kennedy	645
47 K Farrell	645
48 R Jones	645
49 R Lockley	645
50 J Hunt	645
51 D Shutes	645
52 Michael Horan	645
53 Mr Pregan	645
54 St Ralphy	645
55 Mr M Kennedy	645
56 Mr M Kennedy	645
57 Mr M Kennedy	645
58 Mr M Kennedy	645
59 Mr M Kennedy	645
60 Mr M Kennedy	645
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Richard Cork views the two magnificent sculptures that once graced the entrance to London's famous insane asylum

And so to Bedlam, with compassion

When London's Bethlem Hospital was rebuilt in Moorgate during the 1670s, it boasted the grandeur of a palace. The first custom-designed British hospital for the insane, this resplendent showpiece was meant to impress. But the two colossal figures carved for the gate amounted to far more than extravagant ornamentation. They deserve to be ranked among the most outstanding sculpture ever produced in this country.

As the Museum of London's *Bedlam* exhibition reminds us, these monumental stone images left no one indifferent to their power. They quickly became the most celebrated works carved by Caius Gabriel Cibber, the Danish-born sculptor, already much admired for his allegorical bas-relief at the base of the Monument, near London Bridge. Both figures, reclining on carved replicas of straw matts, occupied prominent positions on the ends of a broken pediment above the gate's elaborate stone piers.

Cibber's figures were perched about 14 ft above the ground, but their ample dimensions and expressive force were never forgotten by those passing between the high walls. The carvings became synonymous in the public's mind not only with "Bedlam", but with the whole notion of madness itself. References to them abound in the art and literature of the following century, most notably in Pope's description of "Great Cibber's brazen bramless brothers" from *The Dunciad*, and Hogarth's overt quotation in the Bedlam scene from *A Rake's Progress*. Here the deranged Rake adopts a pose frankly reminiscent of the statue on the right side of the hospital gate.

We do not know who was responsible for commissioning Cibber to tackle such an audacious subject. The carvings only came to be known as *Raving Madness* and *Melancholy Madness* in the early 19th century. But the prevailing mood of these two immense figures was clearly intended to be harrowing. They set out to represent the two principal categories of mental disorder identified by contemporary authorities, and their expressions differ accordingly.

Despite the obvious contrast between the two figures, they are united by a profound sense of pathos. The chained figure on the right, who is the more exclamationary of the pair, opens his mouth to utter a cry. But the emotion he embodies is far closer to despair than anything more aggressive or terrifying. Cibber's terracotta model for the statue, revealing how carefully he related it to the form of the broken pediment below, has an authenticity which must derive from studying inmates in the hospital. It is significant that *Raving Madness* supposedly originated in Cibber's first-hand observation of Oliver Cromwell's



"Although Cibber's *Raving Madness* raises his fettters, he makes no real attempt to wrench them off his wrists. He knows how firm his chains really are, and his cry is an acknowledgement of captivity"

porter, Daniel, who entered Bedlam as a patient in 1656. His face, commemorated in an engraving, bears a resemblance to the statue, and the terracotta model has a directness and vivacity that might well derive from life.

In the end Cibber decided, probably because the high position of the carving demanded it, to lift the figure's left arm and push back his head to a more dramatic angle. This increase in outspoken feeling would have been conveyed to the viewer below with greater effectiveness. But Cibber stops short of resorting to melodramatic gestures. Although *Raving Madness* raises his fettters in the air, he makes no real attempt to wrench them off his wrists. He knows, all too well, how firm his chains really are, and the cry he utters is an acknowledgement of captivity.

Cibber's sympathy for victims of mental anguish becomes more clear in *Melancholy Madness*. Partially propping himself up on his matting, the unfortunate man stares out at a world he will never again be able to inhabit. Although the new Bethlem Hospital was dedicated to "the relief and cure of persons distracted", Cibber's doomed inmate appears irrecoverably

deranged. The extent of his predicament is conveyed, not through theatrical bluster, but by the lassitude afflicting his entire body. His legs hang about as he realises that there is no point in raising himself above the bed. Here he reclines, massive in build and yet incapable of applying all that Caliban-like strength to any coherent purpose. His mighty sinews

have grown slack with disuse, rendered impotent by a mind that refuses to harness his physical potential any longer. All he can do is remain prone and abject.

Cibber's chisel has defined the forlorn face of a man divorced from any discerning awareness of the reality he was once able to identify. Worse still, his expression signifies utter emptiness, unrelieved even by a flicker of sentient recognition or the will to recover sanity.

These remarkable carvings offered a corrective to the callous view of madness that made casual visitors throng the wards inside Bedlam. The frisson of parading through its

interior was regarded as an entertainment, like going to the zoo. Hogarth included a couple of idle society ladies smirking in his Bedlam scene from *A Rake's Progress*.

The presence of such voyeurs was bound to heighten the patients' unease. Most of them, after all, were incarcerated in spacious cells, easily viewable from the visitors'

corridor. One

journalist reported

in 1753 that he had witnessed "a hundred spectators making sport of the miserable inhabitants, provoking them into fits of rage".

And the pandemonium increased when other inmates began jangling chains or beating

on the doors to support the beleaguered fellows.

Cibber resisted this deplorable tendency to treat the insane as a hilarious sideshow. Despairing, helpless and embroiled in disorders of the brain so severe that they are deprived of all rational intelligence, his impotent figures are beyond mockery. How could anyone laugh at their suffering, when Cibber

had gone out of his way to avoid absurdity? Until the early 19th century, these carvings offered their onlookers a gravely compassionate vision of the alienation engendered by mental disorder.

The activities within Bedlam eventually began to conform to the spirit in which

Cibber made the statues. By

1766 the London crowd had decided that the London crowd should no longer be allowed to turn its premises into a vulgar amusement.

Just over 20 years later, conditions had improved so much that a French observer described how "the poor creatures there are not chained up in dark cells, stretched on damp ground, nor reclining on cold paving stones... The doors are open, the rooms wainscotted, and long airy corridors give them a chance of exercise. A cleanliness, hardly conceivable unless

seen, reigns in this hospital."

When Wordsworth wrote about his youthful London period in Book VII of *The Prelude*, he placed Cibber's carvings among the greatest wonders of the capital, worthy to be ranked alongside "the Tombs of Westminster", or

"the giddy top/And Whispering

Gallery of St. Paul's".

But attitudes towards insanity and its treatment were now changing so rapidly that, when the Bethlem Hospital moved to Southwark in 1815, Cibber's statues were taken away. Hidden in the entrance hall, behind curtains only drawn aside on committee days and by special request, they were regarded as an embarrassment. Richard Dadd saw nothing wrong in using *Raving Madness* as the basis of his agonised watercolour in 1854.

Two years later, though, the hospital's surveyor, Sydney Smurke, dismissed them as "the frightful figures". Smurke soon put his disapproval into action. In 1858 the statues were taken to the Victoria and Albert, and remained banished from the hospital for more than a century.

Only now are they displayed with fitting pride in the Bethlem's own museum in Monk's Orchard Road, Beckenham. Disdain has given way to admiration, and Cibber's figures can once again be seen as a brave, haunting attempt to define the unfathomable tragedy of fractured minds.

● Bedlam: Custody, Care and Cure is at the Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 (0171-600 3699) until Mar 15

AROUND THE LONDON GALLERIES

EARLIER works by Mark Fairnington — technically expert copies of sections of 17th-century flower paintings laid against a flat coloured ground — make up a large proportion of his exhibition at the Todd Gallery. However, his most recent series shows enticing, light, dew-drenched visions of natural life. Among his close-ups of the natural world are a bug sitting on a much magnified berry and a hummingbird hovering beneath a flower.

By obviously avoiding any reference to photorealism, Fairnington aims to push his vision beyond the real thing. The new paintings manage to avoid being too obvious about the sinister side of beauty and start to combine obsessive artistic intention with the needs of the spectator.

Todd Gallery, 1-5 Needham Road, London W11 (0171-792 1404), until Jan 31

■ A SERIES of large, digitally adulterated colour photographs of people laughing their way through a 1970s cocktail party forms a quite perplexing part of sculptor Jordan Baseman's current exhibition. Elsewhere, in the other galleries, a few extremely small, sometimes real natural elements protrude from the wall. Scale seems everything and a great deal of surrounding space is necessary for the real fly's wings stuck on to a human tooth, the shrunken rabbit's head, or the cast of the very tip of a human tongue sticking out from the wall to have any presence at all. Unfortunately the strange twist of unpleasant finesse and real detail does not pay off. The taxidermist's trade mixes arbitrarily here with other elements to make a show that shifts uneasily between sculptural emptiness and suggestive intimacy.

Richard Salmon, 59 South

SACHA CRADDOCK

Turning on to our great British oddballs

The headline trumpets "Visionary Englishman: A Revelation at Hirshorn". Who can so unexpectedly have enunciated the great mass of American critics? Samuel Palmer, perhaps? John Martin? Turner? No. The new revelation has sprung from the paintbrush of none other than Stanley Spencer, a retrospective of whose work is at present wowing them at the Hirshorn Museum in Washington DC.

Such is the interconnection of the arts these days that it seems an important inspiration for the show was the New York run of the play *Stanley* earlier this year, which introduced Spencer to many Americans for the first time. But biographical interest is one thing, recognition of outstanding artistic quality another. Is Spencer's art too eccentric, too religious, too well English to travel — not only to Washington, but also to Mexico City and San Francisco?

The general response ten years ago of foreign visitors to the Royal Academy's show *British Art in the 20th Century* augured well. The show's avowed intent was to tie the progress of British art closely into international Modernism, but what really enthused visitors from other countries was the work of oddballs like Spencer and Burra, who relate

image of what the V&A does, and moreover of where it is coming from, right from its fully educational Victorian origins in the wake of the Great Exhibition.

But if Spencer, once he kicks away his Pre-Raphaelite origins, has little obviously to do with anything in his own past or immediate surroundings, he is now perceived as having a surprisingly close connection with such a fashionable later figure as Lucian Freud. Paintings which have particularly impressed Americans are the "leg of mutton" double nude of himself and Patricia Preece, and the famously unsparing nudes of Preece from the mid-Thirties. The critics have also been much taken with the straight landscapes. The religious pieces set in Cookham have occasioned more puzzlement, partly because they seem to embody an almost naive faith: religion is apparently easier to take for the sophisticated than if it comes fierce and unfriendly, like the 1958 *Crucifixion*.

Spencer is not the only British national treasure to be touring the United States at the moment. The huge show *A Grand Design*, which has just begun its 18-month itinerary at Baltimore Museum of Art, does more than give a sample of standard "treasures" from the Victoria and Albert Museum. It sets out to give a serious

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

● Stanley Spencer: An English Vision is at the Hirshorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC (001 202 357 2000) to Jan 11. A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum is at Baltimore Museum of Art (001 410 396 7100) to Jan 11

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Wowing the Washington critics: Stanley Spencer's powerful self-portrait from 1959

Sadism, silly suits and Stockport County



A review
of the
best, the
worst and
the oddest
in the
courts
during the
past year

The past year boasts strong contenders for the awards of most optimistic submission by counsel, most ridiculous law suit, most injudicious judge and most unsatisfactory juror — among other hotly contested honours.

Optimistic submission of 1997 was made on behalf of Stockport County Football Club, which was appealing against an industrial tribunal decision that the club's manager had been unfairly dismissed. The finance director had told the manager to come to a meeting the following day at which the finance director would "tear up his contract and shove it up his arse". The employment appeal tribunal noted that "it is suggested on behalf of the club that this was a very proper invitation to a disciplinary committee at which these matters would be fairly heard". The club's appeal failed.

Stupid law suit of the year was the one brought by a supporter of Leicester City Football Club, who unsuccessfully claimed damages from the Football Association on the ground that the referee's decision to award a penalty against his team in an FA Cup match caused him such distress that he had to miss two days' work. Close behind was the claim for negligence (dismissed by the Court of Appeal) by the man who won the 30-metre race for fathers at his children's primary school sports day, beating Robbie Fowler, the footballer — then ran into a brick wall.

As always, there was strong competition for absurd lawsuit of the year in a foreign court. In Seanie, Norman Mayo, a self-proclaimed "milkaholic" who had suffered a stroke, claimed damages from milk companies on the ground that "milk is just as dangerous as tobacco" and so dairy products should carry warnings. A man from Cork failed to persuade the Irish High Court that the four candidates for the Irish presidency, all women, should be eliminated because the Constitution referred to the President as "he". Injudicious judge of the year was Joseph Troisi, who resigned from the bench in West Virginia after he took off his robes, stepped down from the bench and bit a defendant on the nose. In this country, less than a week after resigning from the circuit bench, Angus MacArthur was jailed for 28 days for his third drink-driving offence in 12 years. In dismissing an appeal by a defendant convicted of various offences of dishonesty, the Court of Appeal held that "the fact that a judge might have fallen asleep during



Clockwise from top left: Myra Hindley must stay in jail, Dame Shirley Porter has to pay £27 million, the Lord Chancellor compared himself with Cardinal Wolsey, another Kray went to jail, Carl Bridgewater's murder remains involved, Paula Jones seen with President Bill Clinton

part of the trial did not necessarily mean that prejudice had been caused to the appellant".

Unsatisfactory juror of the year was sitting at Luton Crown Court, where Judge Alan Wilkie, QC, had to order a retrial for a man accused of supplying crack cocaine because Shane Smyth told the defendant, from the jury box: "Why don't you plead guilty? You are ***ing guilty." The Court of Appeal allowed an appeal by two jurors imprisoned by a Crown Court judge for contempt of court because he wrongly believed that they were refusing to give a verdict.

There was strong competition for witness of the year. Giving evidence during his libel action against *The Guardian* for alleging (among other

matters) that he supplied prostitutes to businessmen, Jonathan Aitken told of his horror at being asked by his son: "What's a pimp, Daddy?" Two weeks later, Mr Aitken abandoned his claim. Charlie Kray was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment after being convicted of offering to supply large quantities of cocaine, despite evidence from "Mad Frankie" Fraser that Kray "wouldn't say boo to a goose. He's a lovely man."

An English barrister, appearing as an expert witness for Countess Spencer in her effort to obtain more money than her husband was offering in their divorce proceedings, told a South African court: "I'm not an estate agent, but personally I think £300,000 would only get a house in a very

unattractive distant suburb of London with problems, perhaps, of crime."

In the year in which the new Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, criticised "fat cat lawyers", the award for unpleasant lawyers of the year was easily won by a firm of solicitors in Birmingham. After one of its lawyers hanged himself because of pressure of work, the firm sent his elderly mother a bill for more than £12,000 for the time spent dealing with his death (including a fee of £150 for telling her about the tragedy). The firm later waived the charges because of the adverse publicity. In civil cases, the Court of Appeal required the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority to reconsider whether Diane Blood

should be allowed to have a child using the sperm of her dead husband. The Court of Appeal also ruled that local authorities have a duty to house and feed impudent applicants for asylum. The Divisional Court found Dame Shirley Porter, former leader of Westminster City Council, guilty of "wilful misconduct" in the "homes-for-votes" affair and upheld a £27 million surcharge by the District Auditor on her and her deputy.

Important criminal cases included the decision of the House of Lords that the Home Secretary should reconsider the tariff of 15 years which he had imposed on the 11-year-old boys convicted of murdering two-year-old James Bulger. In the Divisional Court, the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, dismissed a challenge by the Moors murderer, Myra Hindley, to the decision by the Home Secretary that she should spend the whole of her life in prison as punishment for her crimes. The Court of Appeal allowed appeals by three men who had served 18 years in prison for the murder of Carl Bridgewater.

A number of barristers suffered unusual experiences in the course of duty during 1997. A hearing at Guildford Crown Court had to be stopped in the afternoon because both prosecution and defence counsel were taken ill after eating a curry in the canteen at luncheon. Trials at York station were delayed when the wind scattered defence counsel's documents on to the track. At the Old Bailey, prosecuting counsel broke down while reading to the court an account of the defendant's systematic torture of a baby.

The High Court granted Sir Nicholas Lyell, Attorney-General, in the last Conservative Government, an injunction to stop another man from standing in his constituency at the general election under the same name. After being prosecuted for an alleged criminal offence, the fake Sir Nicholas adopted the name by deed poll because the Attorney-General "had taken my good name, so I took his". The European Court of Human Rights caused unwelcome pain to sodomists by rejecting their complaint about their convictions for assault on consenting victims.

The United States Supreme Court ruled that Paula Jones could pursue her claim alleging that she had been sexually harassed in 1991 by Governor, now President, Bill Clinton. In Massachusetts, Judge Zobel reduced the murder conviction of the sex pair Louise Woodward to a conviction for manslaughter, and sentenced her to 279 days in jail, the time she had already served. An Italian

court decided that a wife was not responsible for her marriage breakdown when she walked out because of her mother-in-law's interference.

In England, Lady Justice Butler-Sloss, allowing an appeal by a mother who had lost custody of her children because they had seen her and her fiancé naked, explained in the Court of Appeal that judges "can be disapproving but they must not allow themselves to be shocked". In 1998 there will be more for judges to disapprove of, and ample temptation for them to be shocked.

• The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

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CRICKET: REIFFEL'S BOLD BATTING SWINGS FIRST TEST BACK TO AUSTRALIA

Proud Donald stands supreme

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

ALLEN DONALD and Paul Reiffel, rival new-ball bowlers, were the dominant figures of the fourth day of the first Test in Melbourne. Donald completed a return of six for 59 yesterday, which took him to 171 wickets in Test cricket and made him the leading wicket-taker for South Africa, having overtaken the late Hugh Taylor.

Thanks to Reiffel's unbeaten 79 from 115 balls, Australia reached 257 in their second innings and when South Africa set off in pursuit of a victory target of 381, Reiffel dismissed Gary Kirsten with only two runs on the board, his hundredth wicket in Tests.

At the close South Africa had reached 79 for one after thanks to a determined partnership between Adam Bacher and Jacques Kallis, giving their side real hope of holding out for a draw. Winning the game will be a tall order on a wearing pitch on which it will

FEARSOME FIVE

	Wkts	Tests
1 Allan Donald	171	36
2 Hugh Taylor	170	36
3 D G Gooch	162	41
4 Peter Pollock	116	38
5 Neil Adcock	104	26

be difficult to keep Shane Warne at bay.

When Donald dismissed Healy for his fourth wicket Australia were 128 for seven, but Reiffel and the tailenders then added another 129. Reiffel, who deserves to be reclassified as an all-rounder, hit six handsome fours.

Since his recall to the team for the second Test at Lord's last June, Reiffel, who will play for Northamptonshire next season, has scored 463 runs at an average of 66.14, including four half-centuries. His previous highest score was 77.

Australia's recovery from 44 for four was started by Mark Taylor, the captain, who reached 59 before being adjudged caught at slip of Symcox. It was Taylor's 36th Test half-century and a courageous innings under trying circumstances as he battled away for more than four hours.

The bowlers did not lose control until Reiffel and Mich-



Donald in full cry at Melbourne, where his record-breaking efforts were nullified by the Australia tailenders

ael Kasprowicz lashed 62 runs for the ninth wicket, before Donald had Kasprowicz caught at point to go past Taylor's wicket total of 170.

However, Donald could not prevent Reiffel and Glenn McGrath from putting on a further 49 for the final wicket and it was left to Shaun Pollock to close the innings by having McGrath caught for 18.

Donald, who had match figures of nine for 135, said later that he believed a South Africa win was still possible.

"I'm not putting it out of sight, we've just got to play the first session really sensibly, not lose too many wickets and see how we go from there," he said.

SCOREBOARD FROM MELBOURNE

AUSTRALIA: First Innings 309 (P T Ponting 105, S R Waugh 96, P. Symcox 4 for 69).

Second Innings

M T G Elliott bowled Donald 1.

G S Symcox bowled Donald 58.

M E Waugh bowled Donald 6.

S R Waugh & Richardson bowled Pollock 17.

G S Symcox & Symcox bowled Pollock 24.

A H Arundell bowled Donald 75.

P R Reiffel not out 79.

S K Warne & Symcox bowled Donald 10.

G D McGrath & McCallum bowled Pollock 18.

E V Radford bowled Donald 11.

Total 5108, 6-129, 7-128, 8-145, 9-208.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-4, 2-10, 3-12, 4-44, 5-108, 6-129, 7-128, 8-145, 9-208.

BOWLING: Donald 27-9-58-6; Pollock 21-5-58-3; Symcox 35-8-90-1; McCallum 24-6-0; Kasprowicz 9-2-28-0; Cronje 2-0-11-0.

SOUTH AFRICA: First Innings 185 (G Kirsten 83).

Second Innings

G Kirsten & Reiffel 0.

A M Becker not out 34.

J H Kallis not out 40.

Extra (5, 3, nb 2) 5.

Total 5108, 6-129, 7-128, 8-145, 9-208.

FALU OF WICKET: 1-2.

BOWLING: McGrath 8-4-18-0; Reiffel 6-3; Symcox 4-0-10-0; Warne 8-1-27-0; M E Waugh 2-0-0-0; Umphers 5; S Buchholz (West Indies) and S G Rander (Australia).

Donald said he had been determined to break Taylor's record at Melbourne. "It's a major milestone for me and to know I am the leading wicket-taker for my country is a great honour. Now the 200 is in sight and I would love to reach that figure, hopefully before the World Cup in 1999."

Donald achieved the record in his 36th Test, one less than Taylor, an off-spinner, who died earlier this year. Donald, 31, did not start his Test career until April 1992, when South Africa was allowed back into international sport, but had already built a reputation with Warwickshire.

"I think I have done it [the record] in good time and if I end up with 250 Test wickets I will be very satisfied with my career," said Reiffel.

Reiffel urged his team-mates not to lose patience on the final day, during which a minimum of 90 overs must be bowled. "I'm sure we can get nine wickets, but not if we're impatient and get frustrated. You can survive on this pitch and it's up to us to play disciplined cricket," he said.

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Mystery with a thoroughly modern flavour

Which of us wasn't counting the minutes to last night's conclusion of *The Woman In White* (BBC1), having been left dangling by the great Callow cliffhanger? Yes, of course we had all realised, as Sunday's instalment was ending, that it was Simon Callow's dastardly Count Fosco who had betrayed Marian Fairlie and her half-sister, Laura, to the hateful Sir Percival Glyde, but we were still unable to unravel Wilkie Collins' biggest mystery: how had roly-poly Simon Callow got so slim since we last saw him? And would he like Nigel Lawson, now publishing a diet book?

Actually, it's a triumph since every time Tara Fitzgerald's Marian appeared on screen it was hard to focus on anything else. Fitzgerald's face can say more in ten seconds than many actors manage in ten minutes: her eyes, like microdots, are loaded with an improbable

amount of coded, sensitive information, which she conveys with switches and glints. It made her the perfect pivot for a story that the BBC, cleverly, decided to fast-forward into two pacy episodes, rather than a dozen plodding ones — even though this meant denying us the pleasure of seeing the sinister (albeit slimmer) Fosco get his comeuppance.

And by giving Fitzgerald the punchiness of a plain-speaking, modern-day heroine, scriptwriter David Pirie not only rid Collins's story of some of the clichés of costume drama (apart, that is, from casting James "frock-coat" Wilby as Glyde), but he injected it with the adrenalin of a contemporary thriller. This is in spite of the fact that the plot — which is powered by Sir Percival's ability effectively to impersonate his wife and Marian on his remote estate as he manouevres to kill Laura (Justine Waddell) for her inheritance —

would be pretty much impossible if, say, the telephone had existed in the mid-19th century. Mobile telephones, of course, would make the story even more of a nonsense, unless Sir Percival's estate happened to nestle in one of those spots that are a dead zone for Mercury One-2-One.

By taking Collins's story out of its museum case, Tim Fywell's direction conveyed more persuasively why *The Woman In White* created such a hubbub when it first came out. Perfumes, ships, dances and bonnets were named after it. Which stories today would inspire manufacturers in quite the same way? Officially licensed *Lion Patient* sweatshirts, yes; but probably not impromptu *English Patient* imitations, in spite of its Oscars; nor can one imagine HMS *The God Of Small Things*.

Hilary, depressingly, had consid-

erably more success with his murder plans than did Glyde. The *Lost Children of Berlin* (BBC2) brought together 50 or so survivors of the Gross Hamburgerstrasse School, which once taught the children of prewar Berlin's 50,000-strong Jewish community, before the Gestapo diligently picked off the pupils and teachers, as though flicking irksome specks off their epaulettes. Each morning the

REVIEW

Joe Joseph

children would arrive to find another empty desk in the classroom where their best friend had sat only yesterday: or another teacher deported to a concentration camp. Sometimes it was their own fathers who had been stolen in the night. These were the children — fatherless, teacherless, friendless — for whom "Ich bin ein Berliner", John Kennedy's call for solidarity in the face of despotism, came 25 years too late.

The children learnt metalwork, not maths. "I didn't finish my education," recalls Israel Loewenthal. "I went to school only for seven years. Our head was not for studying, our head was for surviving." By 1942, all the surviving children could fit into one classroom. Then the school was closed down. The children tried to cling to life. Hans Radziewski, who had earned pocket money gardening in the cemetery, took refuge among the graves: "On some there were

loose covers. You could open them and hide in there. There were also graves that were to be used the next day. They were covered, so you could hide in those, too."

German schoolchildren still also taught how to spot any Jewish children at large. There was even a book, *The Poison Mushroom*, which instructed them in the knack of detecting the poisonous mushroom from among the edible ones: Jews were portrayed as poisonous, and therefore a threat to the Nazi ideal of a racially pure Germany. To make matters easier, all Jewish boys had to change their name to Israel, and all Jewish girls to Sarah. Oh yes, and Jewish kids were banned from keeping pets. And they had to wear a yellow star, too. For smart Aryans, those Nazis certainly required plenty of clues to help them along.

Elizabeth Mcintyre's film ends with a former pupil, standing in the hall of the recently reopened and redecorated Gross Hamburgerstrasse School, reciting names of long-dead classmates, killed in concentration camps. Strangely enough, the school's piano had survived intact.

Have I missed something? The footballer David Seaman turned up briefly in *Dame Edna Kisses It Better* on Boxing Day, and again last night in *Operación Good Guy* (BBC2), a slow-burn, spookily-on-the-wall documentary set in a police station. Has Seaman agreed to become a television version of *Where's Wally*? this Christmas, forcing him to make discreet guest appearances in everything from *Coronation Street* to *News At Ten*? Is there a telephone number viewers are supposed to call when we have noticed up ten sightings or something? I only ask.

BBC1

7.00am News (1) (225505) 7.15 Paddington Peas (228854) 7.40 The Best World of Richard Scarry (922180) 8.05 Casper Classics (542064) 8.30 Jonny Quest (117009) 8.55 Blue Peter (1) (1) 8.58 Sweet Valley High (118284) 9.00 Teletubbies (972108) 10.20 News (1) (200216) 10.30 The Shaggy Dog (1959) Disney fantasy comedy for children of all ages, with Fred MacMurray and Tommy Kirk (77459) 12.00 Waiting for God 1983 Christmas edition (1) (16517) 12.30pm Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook (1) (77789) 1.00 News (1) and weather (5097165) 1.15 Neighbours (1) (7719834) 1.35 We're Basic: A Dinosaur's Story (1989) Adventure featuring a host of famous voices, including John Goodman, Felicity Kendal and Rhea Perlman (209837) 2.40 Vets in Practice (1) (1) (446322) 3.10 The World's Strongest Man Last semi-final (1) (728769) 3.40 Battle to Africa: The Comic Relief all-star football team (1) (6162769) 4.30 Tom and Jerry (7232740) 4.40 A Flintstone Family Christmas (209837) 5.05 Neverround '97 (1) (9755816) 5.35 Neighbours (1) (7719834) 6.00 News (1) and weather (855450) 6.15 Regional News (850905) 6.30 Watchdog: House Style presented by Anne McEvitt (1) (505) 7.00 Holiday Post-holiday Hong Kong Driving School's Malabar Run on a fly-drive to Spain; the Italian resort of Viareggio; a weekend in Suffolk (7092) 7.30 EastEnders: Grant and Phil light to build a new bridge with their wives (1) (189) 8.00 Mrs Doubtfire (1993) Robin Williams as a man who poses as a female to become a nanny to his own children when his wife walks out on him. With Pierce Brosnan and Sally Field. Directed by Chris Columbus (1) (Continued after the News) (586) 9.00 News (1) and weather (5479) 9.30 Film: Mrs Doubtfire Concluded (1) (47249-5) 10.30 Reward of the Year David Dimbleby looks back on the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, as well as other memorable events of 1997: Labour's return to power after an absence of 18 years; Hong Kong's return to China; the vote for devolution in Scotland and Wales (7) (5092994) 11.45 Carry On Up the Khyber (1988) One of the best of the *Carry On* series. Set in India as a tale of the British Raj having trouble with a native revolt. Directed by Gerald Thomas (441653) 1.15 Sam A. Nighthawk Sang in Berkeley Square (1979) Richard Jordan, David Glenister, Gloria Graham: Star in a crime caper based on a true story. Directed by Ralph Thomas (513124) 2.55 Weather (2049567) 3.00 BBC News 24

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BBC2

7.05am Kisses Chronicling the history of the screen kiss (1) (7657585) 7.50 The Piffl Silver Show (Mw) (1) (6841547) 8.15 Great Mysteries and Myths of the 20th Century: Mata Hari (9222768) 8.40 42nd Street (1933) Classic Busby Berkeley-choreographed musical Broadway with Warner Baxter, Ruby Keeler and a young Ginger Rogers. Directed by Lloyd Bacon (1489740) 10.05 The Great Romances of the 20th Century Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford (1) (714948) 10.35 The Stratton Story (1949) James Stewart stars as Monty Stratton, a talented baseball player. With June Allyson, Agnes Moorehead. Directed by Sam Wood (1916011) 12.15pm Perfect Day (8814301) 12.20 Cambridge Folk Festival (23) Richard Thompson, Jackson Browne, Airo-Celt Sound System (4142653) 1.10 Fireman Sam (3357108) 1.20 The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures: The Magical Maze (35) (2834363) 2.20 The Crimson Pirate (1952) Burt Lancaster stars as an 18th-century pirate, with James Hayter. Directed by Robert Stodola (9271189) 4.00 Everything to Play For Last in series (818) 4.30 Vera Cruz (1954) Western, with Gary Cooper, Burt Lancaster and Ernest Borgnine. Directed by Robert Aldrich (56294) 5.00 The Man Who Never Was (1956) Fact-based wartime drama with Clifton Webb, Gloria Grahame, Robert Flemyng, Stephen Boyd. Directed by Ronald Neame (4784258) 7.43 Perfect Day (1) (209450) 7.45 University Challenge Britain v US (1) (801672) 8.15 The Travel Show Winter holidays in North and Central America (605769) 9.00 Modern Times: The Shrine (1) (Continued after the News) (586) 10.15 Stella Street (281672)



Vengeful Annette Bening (10.25pm)

10.25 Valmont (1989) Period drama about the antics of two lecherous 18th-century aristocrats as they plot the seduction of a virtuous virgin, who also happens to be planning her wedding to a rival. With Annette Bening and Colin Firth in an adaptation of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* directed by Miles Forman (6034924) 12.35pm Women in Love (1989) with Glenda Jackson, Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, Jennie Linden. Ken Russell's film based on the novel by D.H. Lawrence (176763) 2.35 Weather (3950073)

HTV

6.00am GMTV (215212) 9.25 The Fantastic Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor (1652769) 9.55 Regional News (1048011) 10.00 Franska (156363) 10.30 DARYL (1985) with Mary Seth Hurl, Michael McKean and Barret Oliver. A film: two people adopt a ten-year-old boy, little realising that he is, in fact, a robot. Directed by Simon Wincer (1) (97990301) 12.20pm Regional News (889092) 12.30 News (1) (weather) (5702314) 12.55 Baywatch: The Runaway (1) (2840324) 1.30 Cartoon Time (1) (7348458) 1.40 Joe Versus the Volcano (1990) Tom Hanks, as a man who accepts a bizarre proposition when told he has six months to live. Also with Meg Ryan and Lloyd Bridges. Directed by John Patrick Shanley (1) (51203479) 3.30 News (1) and weather (2547769) 3.40 Regional News (8895059) 3.45 Three Amigos! (1986) Comedy western starring Chevy Chase, Steve Martin and Martin Short as fearless heroes of the silent screen. Directed by John Landis (1) (76721) 5.40 News (1) and weather (657479) 6.00 The Badly Man: Pins and Needles and Casualty/Babysitting (491276) 6.25 Regional Weather (300585) 6.30 Regional News (1) (301) 7.00 Emmerdale Kim has a plan to rid herself of the blackmailer (1) (2160) 7.30 WALES: Antiques Trail (585) 7.30 Secrets of the Levels: A Year on West Moors (1) (585) 8.00 Police, Camera, Action (1) (8105) 8.30 The Bill Boyden and Page get involved with an elderly villain's final job (1) (2853) 9.00 McCallum The forensic pathologist returns in the first of four two-part dramas (1) (7189)



Healy's passion for leeks (10.00pm)

10.00 King Leek Comedy drama with Tim Healy and SuEllen (1) (936) 11.00 News (1) and weather (412081) 11.15 Regional News (300769) 11.25 Unlawful Entry (1992) Thriller with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta and Madeline Stowe. After a break-in, a couple become friendly with the local policeman who answered their call. Directed by Jonathan Kaplan (1) (791498) 1.25 Simon & Maron's Movie Club (4010122) 1.55 Pauline (8604702) 2.25 Danielle Steel's Fine Things Drama in which an executive falls for a beautiful divorcee with a young daughter. (1) (2055200) 5.00 Football Extra (4270493) 5.55 News (6991526)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except: 12.54pm Air Watch (22551301) 12.55-1.30 The Fashion Police (2840924) 5.59-8.00 Air Watch (145672) 8.00-7.00 Central News (301301) 7.30-8.00 Motorway (585) 7.35pm Film: The Satan Bug (1965) A sci-fi thriller starring George Maharis, Richard Basehart and Alan Francis. Directed by John Sturges (4861714) 4.00 Film: The Breaking Point (6165)

WEST COUNTRY

As HTV West except: 9.55-10.00 Birthday People (7408011) 12.20pm-12.30 Illuminations (699092) 12.55-1.30 Emmerdale (2840324) 6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (30356) 7.30-8.00 Stirling Stuff (565)

CHANNEL 4

As HTV West except: 12.54pm Air Watch (2257108) 12.55-1.30 Shortland Street (2840924) 6.00 Meridian Tonight (721) 6.30-7.00 The Baldy Man (301) 7.30-8.00 Great Places of the South (585)

ANGELA

As HTV West except: 12.19 Anglia Air Watch (9818127) 12.55-1.30 Millionaires (2840924) 5.39-5.40 Anglia Air Watch (135108) 6.00 And Take This Bus to Canada (301214) 6.30-7.00 Anglia News (782301) 7.30-8.00 Out to Lunch with Brian Turner (585) 11.44 Anglia Air Watch (552295)

SC4

Starts: 6.00am Sesame Street (82127) 7.00 The Babysitters' Club (9161450) 7.35 Two Stupid Dogs (8221214) 8.00 The Big Breakfast (1818) 10.00 Zig and Zag's Big Morning (6631011) 10.41 Happy Days (694365) 10.45 Saved by the Bell (1167450) 11.05 Moesha (5287108) 11.30 The Monkees (8286363) 12.05 Coping With School (2097011) 12.35 Earle, Indiana (1) (5700127) 1.00 A Woman of Substance starring Deborah Kerr, Jenny Seagrove and John Mills (2) (1) (9130) 4.00 Bewitched (214) 4.30 Countdown (7) (208633) 4.55 Rick Lake. Today's guest believes her late mother is trying to settle unfinished business (1) (5471289) 5.30 Dr Who and the Daleks (1965) starring Peter Cushing, Roy Castle and Jennie Linden. Big screen version of the popular sci-fi television series. Directed by Gordon Flemyng (1) (62627)

CHANNEL 5

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE

Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra 2 satellite. Viewers with a Videodisc decoder will be able to view the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 63 are picture: 10.20/205 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz

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12.35 Earle, Indiana (1) (5700127)

1.00 A Woman of Substance starring Deborah Kerr, Jenny Seagrove and John Mills (2) (1) (9130)

4.00 Bewitched (214) 4.30 Countdown (7) (208633) 4.55 Rick Lake. Today's guest believes her late mother is trying to settle unfinished business (1) (5471289)

5.30 Dr Who and the Daleks (1965) starring Peter Cushing, Roy Castle and Jennie Linden. Big screen version of the popular sci-fi television series. Directed by Gordon Flemyng (1) (62627)

10.00 Animal Xtremer: Tricycle — The Animal Kingdom (1993) 10.30 The Big Adventure (1993) 10.30 The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (5621562) 12.30-2.00 Family Affairs (1) (1167108) 1.00 5 News (840496) 1.05 Sunset Beach (1) (474503)

2.00 Running (1983) with Robbie Benson. Story of a boy with a bionic limb who left his reservation to find his place in the running track. Directed by D.S. Everett (4575339)

3.55 Holiday Affair (1949) 6.00 100 Per Cent (4313585) 6.30 Family Affairs (1) (4304837) 7.00 Exclusive (5765450) 7.30 Empire of the Elephant (1) (4393721)

8.00 Vanessa's Day With Vanessa Feltz spends her day with Neil and Christine Hamilton (5781498)

8.30 5 News (1) (5760905)

CHANNEL 5</



RUGBY UNION 31

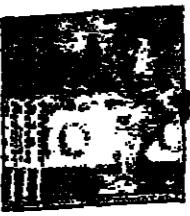
Newcastle's charge to the top under threat from Leicester

SPORT

TUESDAY DECEMBER 30 1997

CRICKET 34

Australia push back boundaries to win women's world title



Selectors prefer Atherton as one-day captain



Atherton: regained control

ADAM HOLLOOKE will not, after all, continue in charge of England's one-day side. Widespread expectation that his reward for winning the Champions Trophy in Sharjah would come with his reappointment for the limited-overs series in the West Indies proved misplaced yesterday when the selectors instead selected Michael Atherton.

The surprise announcement was made by the chairman of selectors, David Graveney, at a hotel near Gatwick where the England A team players were gathering before departing for Kenya and Sri Lanka. The management team for that tour comprises Graveney's fellow selectors, Graham Good and Mike Gatting, and their views were undoubtedly paramount in the decision.

The two former England captains apparently expressed reservations about the concept of dividing the

position between two men. Plainly, there was a fear that the authority of the overall captain might be diminished. Atherton, therefore, will retain control for the full 14-week stay in the Caribbean where, ironically, he is at present on holiday.

Hollooake, who will be his vice-captain for the five-match one-day series, put a brave face on what must have come as a shock. "It was obviously a difficult decision for the selectors," he said. His consolation is that all but two of his victorious Sharjah party will be involved. Of the 13-man squad named yesterday, seven will be flown in specifically for the limited-overs games.

Only Alistair Brown and Peter Marlin have been omitted from the Sharjah contingent, but the ten members of the full West Indies tour party missing from the 13 will not all automatically be sent home. Up to three of them may be added to the

one-day party at a later date and Darren Gough, the most notable omission, is an obvious candidate.

The selectors have acted with admirable alacrity in making their verdict public before the tour begins, the idea being to preempt prolonged and distracting speculation. It is now, however, an issue that is unlikely to disappear for the very valid reason that the selectors may have got it wrong.

There was good cause for continuing the experiment with Hollooake and it had nothing to do with the inevitable overreaction to victory in Sharjah. The protection and preservation of Atherton for the more grave business of Test cricket was a powerful motivation and there must now be a danger that he will come to regret this show of loyalty.

It is not that Atherton dislikes

scrutinised harshly against the populist attractions of Hollooake.

Graveney was insistent that the decision had been unanimous and that there had been no change of thinking. "I said in Sharjah that we must go away and talk about it," he said. "It was being widely written up that Adam would keep the job, but it was never said by any of us."

So widely was it being reported, indeed, that the Cefax service erroneously carried a story, two weeks ago, confirming Hollooake's reappointment. Graveney, the tour manager in Sharjah, quickly had this removed but the impression remained strong that the decision only required official corroboration.

Atherton, who was telephoned in Jamaica by Graveney yesterday, had done no more than express a preference that the master should be resolved quickly. Losing the leadership of the one-day side would not

unduly have distressed him; losing his place in the side most certainly would have done.

Graveney spoke out in defence of the captain's approach to one-day cricket and scotched suggestions that he had little interest in it. "I have been working closely with Michael since early November and I have never heard him say anything about not playing in every England game," he said. "He is very determined to rediscover his best form."

Atherton added: "I have always been keen to play one-day cricket and that remains my view. I am looking forward to working with Adam. He did an outstanding job in Sharjah and all of us in the West Indies will be keen to find out how things worked there and to continue that momentum."

Donald's landmark, page 34
Young guns, page 34

PHOTOGRAPHS: CLAUDIO SCACCONI

Problems increase for head coach

Gross's future at Tottenham under a cloud

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

FURTHER doubt was cast over the future of Christian Gross as head coach of Tottenham Hotspur yesterday when the Department for Education and Employment turned down the application for a work permit for Fritz Schmid, Gross's fitness adviser.

When Gross joined Tottenham last month, he emphasised the need for a specialist trainer at White Hart Lane and that he wanted to bring over Schmid from Grasshopper, their former club in Zurich.

Gross's turbulent 40-day reign at White Hart Lane received another setback when Les Ferdinand, the Tottenham striker, voiced concern about having been told to train on Christmas Day, despite having sustained a bruised thigh in the 3-0 victory against Barnsley on December 20. Ferdinand claimed that the injury then worsened and, consequently, he was forced to miss the matches against Aston Villa and Arsenal.

Little has gone right for Gross since he succeeded Garry Francis on November 20. Tottenham have won only two of the six matches under his

guidance, losing three times and conceding 15 goals, and have slipped to nineteenth in the FA Carling Premiership. Although the arrival of Jürgen Klinsmann has helped to deflect some of the criticism, Gross will be particularly unhappy at the Employment Department's decision.

Schmid, 38, is a close friend of Gross and worked alongside him at Grasshopper. A former youth and reserve team player with the club, he completed his studies in physi-

cal education at the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and has an extensive knowledge of sports medicine and injury rehabilitation.

Gross had hoped that the work permit would be processed swiftly but it was complicated by the fact that Schmid, like Gross, is Swiss. Switzerland is not a member of the European Union and, therefore, the usual rules allowing freedom of movement within the European Community do not apply.

It was originally believed that Gross only signed his 18-month contract on the condition that Schmid joined him, but Tottenham yesterday denied that there was any such clause. "The terms of Christian Gross's employment have never been conditional upon the employment of anyone else," a club spokesman said.

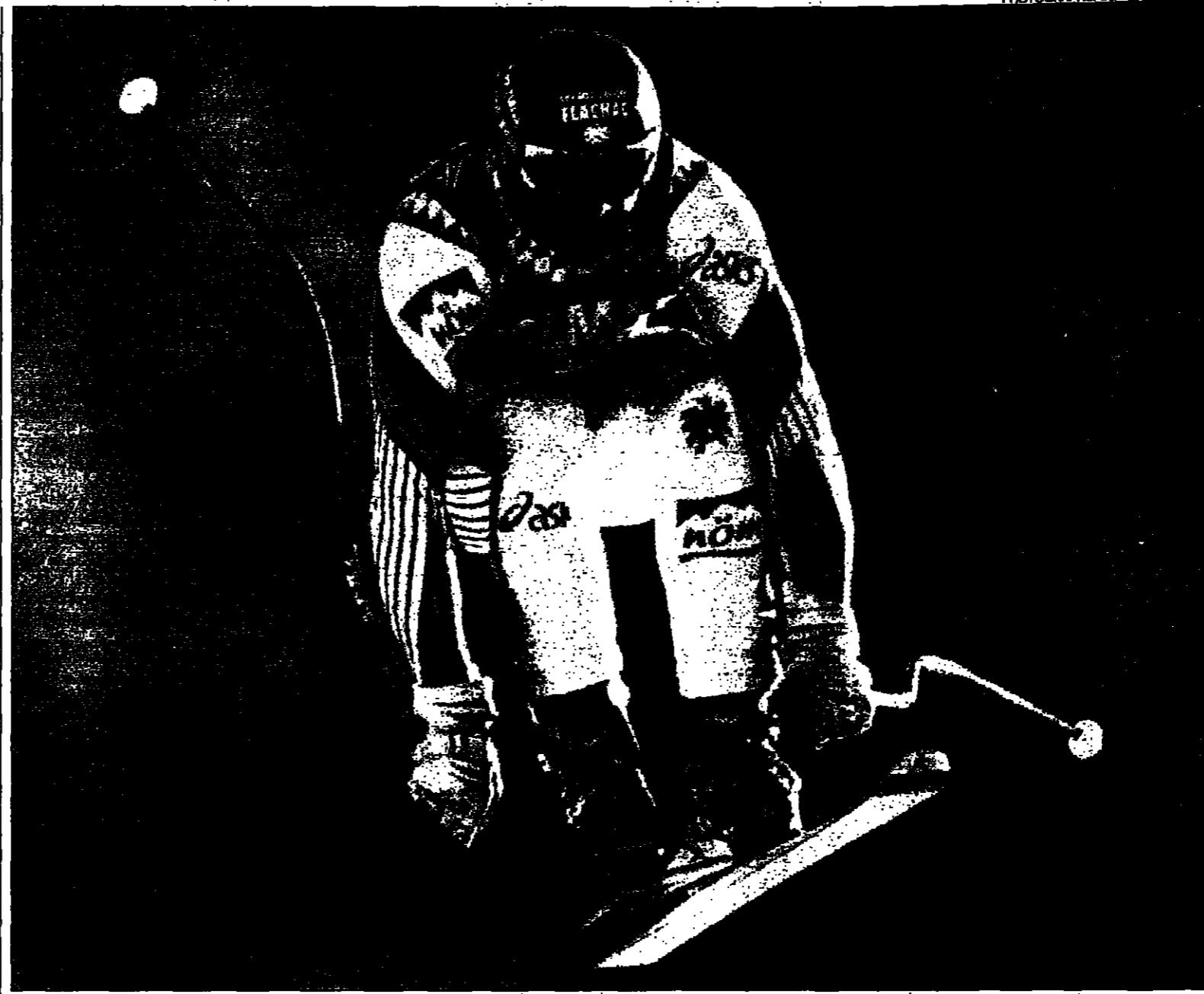
On Sunday, after the 1-1 draw at home to Arsenal, Gross was coy about his future at Tottenham should Schmid's application be unsuccessful. "If you are asking if I'll go if he doesn't get it, I cannot answer you," he said. "I just cannot say."

Yesterday, amid reports that he was being considered for the vacant coaching job of the Switzerland national side, he was more forthcoming. "This is all speculation," Gross said. "There is no question of me taking charge of the Swiss team. I am committed to Spurs."

Pierre Benoit, chief of communications for the Swiss FA, said yesterday: "Christian was a candidate before he moved to Tottenham but not any more. There have been no discussions, there is no possibility of him coming back here. We are still looking."

Benoit said that Gross appeared happy in London, though that is unlikely to be the case when he hears the comments of Ferdinand. The England striker had a scan on his injured thigh yesterday and could be out for a month.

"I had rested my leg for a few days I probably could have played against Arsenal, but I was made to train through it," Ferdinand said. "I trained on Christmas Day, tried to shoot and felt it go. There's muscle damage and a lot of blood under the surface of the skin."



Maier flies through the air on his way to victory in the men's downhill in Bormio yesterday, a result that extended his overall World Cup lead

Maier takes honours as Austrians dominate again

HERMANN MAIER won the men's World Cup downhill race at the Italian resort of Bormio yesterday. It was his first downhill triumph and the Frenchman was treated on the first four places.

The 25-year-old former bricklayer scored his third World Cup victory of the season, recording a time of 2min 01.59sec to increase his lead in the overall standings. Andreas Schiffner was second, three hundredths of a second back, and Werner Franz third, a further fifth of a second behind.

Maier said that he was being considered for the vacant coaching job of the Switzerland national side, he was more forthcoming. "This is all speculation," Gross said. "There is no question of me taking charge of the Swiss team. I am committed to Spurs."

The Austrians have dominated the early-season Alpine events, leading up to the Olympic Games in Nagano in February, and yesterday filled seven of the first ten places on a tight, twisting, technical Stelvio course. Maier, who also has super giant and giant slalom wins to his credit this season, is fast emerging as a great all-rounder.

Benjamin Melquiond, meanwhile, sustained a broken shoulder, concussion and a cut eye in a high-speed crash during what was the third of a

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

the season's 11 World Cup downhill races. Racing was held up while the 22-year-old Frenchman was treated on the first four places.

Melquiond, who is expected to be sidelined for at least a month, lost his balance and crashed through safety nets at the S-shaped section preceding the final jump on the icy course.



Melquiond: injured

The race was the first World Cup downhill since December 5 — when Maier finished second behind Schiffner — and is followed by a second downhill at Bormio today.

"I have to admit I'm a little surprised to have won," Maier said. "My tactics were to take it relatively easy today and then go for victory tomorrow. I made a few mistakes near the bottom and I found it difficult to see. One minute I was in sunlight, the next in darkness and I very nearly lost it completely."

Maier said he was almost decided to skip Bormio to concentrate on the giant slalom and super giant race — his favourite events — scheduled for Slovenia and Austria in early January. "Then I saw how icy and fast the course was and I thought I'd give it a go to try to get more World Cup points," he said.

Schiffner said: "I made mistakes on the upper part of the course, so I have to be happy with second. This confirms my victory at Beaver Creek wasn't just a one-off and I hope I can go from here to pick up points in the slaloms."

CARE PARCEL EMERGENCY WINTER APPEAL

Save a Romanian child from cold and hunger this winter

Radu has no Christmas presents to play with: he didn't get any. His parents don't even have money for heating, warm clothes or food. And temperatures are dropping to Siberian levels. He may not survive January at home, and then his parents will be forced to send him to an orphanage. Thousands of children are in Radu's position now as deep poverty and bitter cold force parents to take the heartbreaking decision to put their child in an orphanage.

Your gift of £25 will bring hope and help keep Romanian children in their families this winter. And for always.

You can help protect a child from a cold and hungry winter at home or the trauma of life in an orphanage by

What's in each Care Parcel?

- 10 kilos flour
- 10 kilos potatoes
- 5 kilos rice
- 1 kilo sugar
- 3 litres cooking oil
- 15 litres paraffin
- warm clothing (optional contents)

Help deliver a Care Parcel to Romania this winter for only £25

I enclose £_____ to help deliver Winter Care Parcels to Romanian families. Cheques to The Romanian Orphanage Trust. Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card

Card no. _____ Expiry date _____

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____ Address _____ Postcode _____

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